THE Spiritual Chymist:

OR,

SIX DECADS

Of Divine

Meditations

On several Subjects.

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My meditation of him shall be sweet, Psal. 104. 34.

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The Preface to the Reader.

Chriſtian Reader,

THe natural Sun in the Firmament, whether we conſider the vaſtneſs of its Globe, or the ſplendour, and dazling of its light, or the variety and beneficialneſs of its motion, and operations, attended with duration, and perpetuity, is the top, and Prince of all inanimate beings. Yet the leaſt inſect that the moſt *Artificial Microſcope* can diſcern life in, is able to weigh againſt it, and *in genere entium* is more perfect. How excellent a being then is the Soul of man, that doth not only out-ſtrip the Sun, but all other ſenſitive things, even thoſe that have the moſt lively μιμήματα τῆς ἀιθρωπίνης ζωῆς, as the Philoſopher calls them, which the Oratour tranſlates *Virtutum ſimulacra*, the faint imitations of Reaſon. Now, among the many demonſtrations of the excellency of the Humane Soul,

the operations of it do abundantly witneſs for it, and among them, to go no farther, the operations of thoſe two ſupream Faculties, the Underſtanding and Will, in apprehending, and loving God. Theſe are more excellent than the Suns enlightning the world. I chooſe to inſtance in that, becauſe the ornament, beauty, life of all things depend upon it; for to what purpoſe were theſe things made, were it not that the light of the Sun made them *Proximè viſibilia?* Yet this is nothing in compare with the Soul of man, in its apprehending and loving God. This ſpeaks the Subject endued with a principle not to be tranſcended (but only in degree) in perfection. You cannot have more perfect operations in heaven in kind, though you may in degree. Angels, and Souls made perfect, it is true, do this more intirely, more perfectly, more conſtantly, and unweariedly: But in knowing God, and making choice of him, in loving, and cleaving to him, the ſouls of holy men do according to the capacity of the preſent ſtate communicate with them.

Now theſe two have a mutual aſpect on each other, and the happy Conjunction of Knowledge and Devotion ſpeak the Soul Regular and Uniform in its Acts, and to be in a good meaſure of ſpiritual health. When Knowledge doth guide

guide and steer as it were Devotion, and Devotion doth in a kind of gratitude warm, and enflame our Knowledge; which otherwise is apt to chil, and grow cold, as experience shews in many knowing Creatures, in whom the waters of the Sanctuary have put out the fire. And as the separation of the love of God from the knowledge of God breeds swarms of hypocrites in the visible Church, so the separation of the knowledge of God from affection to God, begets a strange kind of wild fire in the Spirits of men; and while they have Zeal for God (which is nothing but Affection in its full stature, got out of its swadling cloaths) without Knowledge, they are but like a Ship without a Rudder or Ballast, that is a prey to every Pirate, and if it miss them, is carried by its own levity, and the winds impetuousness, on its own ruine. When therefore the blessed Spirit comes to work in the soul, he first enlightens the mind, and sets open, τὰς πύλας σοφίας, the gates of light, and then the Will ecchoes to the Understanding, and certainly that action is most congruous to so excellent a being as the Soul, when the Mind takes its aime before the Affections shoot. For otherwise, though the action doth prove materially good, yet it is no more commendation to him that doth it, than to him that shuts both his eyes, and then contingently hits the

mark. The apprehenſions and affections of Mans Soul, being thus regulated, and conjoyned, do admirably fit and diſpoſe for that we call Meditation: (I mean Divine and Chriſtian Meditation,) which is the off-ſpring of a good heart, and a good head. How excellent and ſweet an employment this is, none can know, but thoſe that have taſted it, and have the skill to ſpiritualize all objects, and providences, turning every thing by a Divine Chymiſtry, *in ſuccum, & ſanguinem*, into ſpirit and nouriſhment. Making the Word, and Works, and Ordinances of God as ſo many Rounds to climbe up to a more clear Viſion, and fervent love of God; and then deſcending make theſe a clear Mirrour wherein they ſee themſelves, and to be like windows, to let in that light into the private and dark receſſes of the heart, that diſcovers the hidden works of darkneſs; and ſo provokes the ſoul to endeavour a more through purgation of it ſelf, which it is the more eaſily exſtimulated to, being under a deep ſence of Gods purity, and a ſerious affection to be like him. But this duty of Divine and Spiritual Meditation, is a thing that in this degenerate age the generality of Chriſtians are utter ſtrangers to, and very hardly brought to the practice of. Though there was never any time wherein the thoughts and minds of men were more buſie

and

and active, and the helps, inducements, and encouragements more plentiful and cogent, and the calls and invitations on Gods part both by his Word and Works more frequent. Yet it is a work of inexpressible difficulty, to bring these subtil and volatile acts of the mind to a fixation, to make any considerable immoration, upon those subjects that are in themselves of the greatest worth, and to us of the neareſt consequence. Now considering, that man is by God made a providential Creature, and doth naturally cast up damages, and gain, and project the obtaining the one, and avoiding the other. I have therefore thought it worth the enquiring what should be the reason of their awkness to this beneficial employment; and considering that Knowledge and Love are the two things that dispose for it. I have thought it might arise from some defect in these, and sometimes thus argued. Surely, this wisdom is too high for fools, that men that have incrassated their souls, and almost extinguished this Divine Lamp by shooting themselves so deep in sensuality and worldliness, that they who have wellnigh forgot their God, their own being, their happiness, should ever be able to mount so high as Meditation. But when I considered, how stupid or sottish soever these men were by debauchery, or pretended to be through want of

education, yet they were ingeniously wicked, and could in their minds lay Schemes of villany, and that their phantasies were alwaies minting and forging wicked devices, which they could in their second thoughts revise and polish, and, like a Second Edition, make the Model to be *Auctior & nequior*, larger and more wicked. I then saw no excuse for them that had wit enough to be wicked, but none to do good. And therefore looking further into the ground of it, I found it arose from the second, want of love to God, which is the stream that sets all the Wheels of the soul a going; the true Spring of motion, and which strongly conglutinates all the musings of the soul. For to this work of Meditation there is not so much required vastness of knowledge, as rectitude of affections, not so much the head of a Schollar, as the heart of a Christian. Neither is it hindred by any thing more than by carnal, and low affections, which both dim the eye of the understanding, and clog the appetite that it cannot hunger after, or relish these heavenly and spiritual dainties. Besides, there is this further reason to be given, That this part of Religion is inward, and removed from the eyes of Spectators. Now, if it be difficult to bring men to a form of Religion any further than advantage, interest, conveniencies, and the like, will stand with it, (which is the true reason many

cry

ery flown all Forms, because they feel their lusts pinched by them.) Much more difficult is it to bring men to those inward, and vital acts of Religion, which would not only imprison, but mortifie, not only check and stunt, but eradicate, and exterminate sin. As for that Religion which the Apostle *Peter* calls, ὁ κρυπτὸς τῆς καρδίας, The hidden man of the heart. And the Apostle *Paul*, ὁ Ἰουδαῖος ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ, being a Jew inwardly, περιτομὴ καρδίας, ἐν πνεύματι, the circumcision of the heart in the Spirit; and in another place, καινὴ κτίσις, The new Creature, which stands in a self exinanition, in conversing with God, in a separation from all ungodliness, and unrighteousness, in conforming our selves to Christ, and living in obedience to his Laws. These are looked on by a great many, but as *Platonick Ideas*, or as an *Eutopia*, or the Philosophers happy man, things that are *entia rationis*, the dreams of melancholy fancies, and not worth the troubling our selves about.

How much do we then owe to those noble and generous souls, that in charity to our ignorance, and dulness, have given us a proof of the employment of their minds, and have so freely unbosomed themselves to us, in their Meditations, and Soliloquies? In which we have the most free and genuine workings of their souls. These being the honey in the combs of their

labour

labour and industry. Certainly, *Christian Reader*, thy soul cannot but cleave to such persons, whose drift and design thou seest it is to exalt God and set forth his Divine Perfections. Dost thou not feel a strange alteration in thy soul, while thou dost but air thy self at those flames that heated their souls? Dost thou not find thy heart glowing within thee, while thou art conversing with their labours, and while light is reflected upon thee from their discourses? Canst thou look upon such as less than Cherubims conversing in the flesh? Is any Oratory more piercing, and ravishing, than the meditation of God in his divine perfections, communicating himself to us fully and freely in the best way through his Son? Is any zeal more commendable than that which is spent in consuming the lusts of thy own heart? Or any desires more justifiable than the pantings and thirstings for him that thirsted after our thirst? Or doth any time run off more smoothly, and which thou canst reflect upon the spending of with more comfort, and satisfaction, than that which is spent in such holy flights of the soul? O blessed work and employment, and happy are those souls that do continually live in it.

In this sweet, and blessed work, was this Reverend Author much employed. Some tastes of which are here offered to thee, though but a

part

part of what he intended, *ten Decads* at leaſt being what he had propoſed to tender to publick view, but God took him to himſelf before he had compleated them.

The other part is but a begun Diſcourſe concerning the Wiles of Satan, I may ſay but begun, for where the Author gave it his laſt hand, thou ſhalt find an Advertiſement in the reading of it. It being made up out of ſome Notes of his own, as will appear to the Judicious; it is the ſame thread, but the tying it in knots is ſome diſadvantage; yet as in an Organ or Virginal, the Pipes and Strings are not of the ſame extent or dimenſion, yet all ſerve to make the melody. So thoſe ſhort and little heads compiled of the Authors materials, will I hope make the work ſomewhat harmonious, though it is every way ſhort of what it ſhould have been, had the ſame hand that began it finiſhed it. A work it is however of very great concernment, and every way becoming a Miniſter, and a Chriſtian, to underſtand his Enemy, to diſcover his Art, and Policy, to unmaske and bring this great Deceiver into open view, *Ut præmoniti, ſimus præmuniti*, being fore-warned, we may be fore-armed. The thoughts of this good man were much upon this ſubject, in ſubſerviency to his Lord and Maſters end of coming into the world, ἵνα λύσῃ, that he might looſen,

or

or dissolve the works of the Devil; and he the rather revived this work now, which he had several years ago discoursed of, not only because he found himself more improved, and fitted for it; but because he saw the necessity of the Church required it. The spirit and courage of Christians being almost spent in intestine quarrels, and broyls, they needed the alarm of this common enemy, to reduce them to order, and unity; and some demonstrations of his craft, in endeavouring to do that by policy, and underhand devices, he could never effect above board with all his power and strength.

But before I close this Preface, I cannot but speak a few words of the Author, Dr. *William Spurstow*, who as he lived beloved of his friends, so he died of all his friends much lamented, not so much for their own, as the Publick loss of him, being a person of such an excellent spirit, that he was many waies useful, and serviceable. I shall not say any thing of his abilities of mind and judgement, since it appears by those things extant of his, that he was none of those *Præcocia ingenia*, *Apuleius* speaks of. Those ratherripe Wits, as one calls them, that are fair in the blossom, but fail in the fruit. But he held such an excellent tenour in his Ministerial labours, that the more wise and judicious any were, the more they were delighted in him, and cleaved to him.

But

But there were ſome graces in him in higher and more eminent degree, that may ſpeak him an example to us that ſurvive. Such were:

Firſt, His profound, and real humility, and that is a root-grace that hath many in it; and this is the true aſcenſion of the ſoul: For as the firſt ſtep downward was by Pride, ſo the firſt ſtep to heaven is by Humility. And as man did deſcend in aſcending to be like God, ſo we aſcend in deſcending to be like Chriſt in Humility. This was the glory of this Author, though he had ſingular worth, yet he alwaies expreſt a ſingular humility, not only in denying thoſe things, which ordinarily men make the fuel to pride, none of which he wanted, but in condeſcending to thoſe of low degree, if he might but be ſerviceable to them. Which was apparent in that freedom of acceſs, and converſe with thoſe, between him and whom there was otherwiſe a great diſparity, eſpecially in that humbleneſs of mind he ſhewed after any large receits, or performances, wherein he ſhewed himſelf like *Moſes*, though his face ſhone he knew it not.

Secondly, His Charity both in giving and forgiving, the latter of which, as it is moſt noble, ſo it is the moſt difficult, and that which is peculiar to Chriſt Diſciples. As for the former, though

though the World might expect more visible and pompous demonstrations of it, yet that charity is best, which, like the waters of *Shiloh*, run softly, and the more private in this case the better. Our Saviour would have our good works shine, and not blaze. Now, that he was not deficient in this, may appear in that he was no hoarder, nor left he any Sums behind him; by which it appears plainly, that he lived to the utmost (if not beyond) the extent of his In-come, which also in vulgar estimation was double to the reality.

Thirdly, To this may be added his Meekness, and Patience, the natural result of Humility, in which graces he was eminent, being seldom or never transported by passion, or if at any time those passions which do repugn that grace did arise, they soon had a counterbuff from the divine principle was in him. He alwaies had an innocent, and grateful chearfulness in his Converse, that rendred it very acceptable, being very free from that morosity of spirit which many times is like a cloud in a Diamond, and like a Curtain before a Picture. And yet as the sweetest Rose hath its prickles, and the industrious Bee (that makes the healing and mollifying Honey and Wax) her sting: So he had a sting of holy Zeal, which wisdom had the conduct of, that it was not put forth upon every trivial provocation;

vocation; he knew when, and where, and how far to ſhew it; and in Gods Cauſe his Zeal was better tempered, than, like a brittle blade, to fly in ſhivers, and wound by-ſtanders; but it was true mettal, and would cut deep, ſo as to leave impreſſions behind it.

Fourthly, Add to this his peaceable diſpoſition, a great ornament to Chriſtianity. It was his principle, and practice, not to have that by contention he might have by peace; and for peace ſake, though he durſt not ſell the truth, yet he did often *Cedere de jure*, depart from his right, and that, *Ne Evangelium detrimenti aliquid capiat*, for the Goſpels ſake, that it might not ſuffer by him. He loved thoſe of a peaceable ſpirit, and was grieved at the contrary ſpirit and practice in any, though his friends. He did heartily bewail our diviſions; and how deſirous he was to obey thoſe commands of the Pſalmiſt and the Apoſtles, *Purſue peace, enſue peace*, noting both the vehemency and ſwiftneſs of the proſecution. If ſome did know, they would not, it may be, be ſatisfied; and if others did know, they would, it may be, be offended, and therefore it is beſt to leave that to him whoſe judgement is according to truth. But I remember I am to write a Preface, not a Narrative of his life. He was a lover of goodmen. Loving and faithful in his Relations; a good Child,

a good Father, a good Husband, a good Brother, a good Master, a good Neighbour, a good Friend, a good Governour, a good Subject, a good Minister; and all because he was a good Christian. He was full of heavenly Ejaculations, contented and patient under the loss of his desired Relations. And as they say the Swan sings sweetly before his death: So was his heart, drawing near his change, full of thankfulness, being like a Vessel that wanted vent. For being graciously preserved in the Visitation, and restored to his friends, he expressed in all his Converses with them, a deep sence of Gods mercy, and a fear least we should soon forget it, and grow cold in our returns of praise, and obedience; and therefore did advise that we would become Monitors to one another, and call upon one another not to forget that God who had so eminently preserved us. Thus was the blessed Spirit of God tuning him for eternal praises, and winding his heart up to that sweet and heavenly work, it pleased God by a short and sweet passage to take him unto. His death was not so much sudden, as speedy. Sudden death is evil, when death finds a man unprepared, but speedy death is a great mercy. The *Prodromi* and Harbingers of death being many times more terrible than death; which made a good man say, *I bless God I fear not death, yet I dare not say but I fear dying.*

Meaning

Meaning, that the beſt Chriſtians have ſomething of nature in them. The Jews, among the ſeveral waies of dying they reckon up, ſay, that of *Moſes* is the beſt, who died at the mouth of the Lord, God took away his ſoul with a kiſs. Yet Cenſorious Worldlings are ready to make ſtrange gloſſes, and comments upon ſuch paſſages of providence, which it would become them rather with a holy ſilence to adore, than with a bold curioſity to pry into. Let them remember that known ſaying, *Qualis vita, finis ita*, He cannot have an ill death, that leads a good life. I would therefore exhort thee, and all others, ſo to live, that we may have that εὐθανασία *Auguſtus* the Emperour prayed for, and that many Saints have, (if it were the will of God,) deſired, in both acceptations of the Word in the preparation of ſoul, and the eaſineſs of diſſolution. That the knot of life may rather be untied than cut; and that our Souls may go, like Ships richly fraught, with full Sails, upon a calm Sea, under a gentle Gale, into the Haven of Happineſs. So praies he

Qui ——

A longè ſequitur veſtigia ſemper adorans.

The Contents of the Meditations.

		Page
Med. 1.	*Upon a Mote in the Eye*	1
Med. 2.	*Upon a piece of battered Plate*	2
Med. 3.	*Upon the* Galaxia *or milky way*	3
Med. 4.	*Upon a Picture and a Statue*	5
Med. 5.	*Upon a Graff*	6
Med. 6.	*On a Glass without a foot*	7
Med. 7.	*Upon the sight of a Lilly and a Violet*	9
Med. 8.	*On a Crum going the wrong way*	11
Med. 9.	*On two Lights in a Room*	12
Med. 10.	*On building after fires*	13
Med. 11.	*On the Torrid Zone*	15
Med. 12.	*On strength and length in Prayer*	17
Med. 13	*On the Morning Dew*	18
Med. 14.	*On a Pearl in the eye*	21
Med. 15.	*On spiritual and bodily sickness*	23
Med. 16.	*On a Lamp and a Star*	24
Med. 17.	*On a Chancery Bill*	26
Med. 18.	*On the Philosophers Stone*	28

Med.19. *On a Greek Accent* 30
Med.20. *On a debauched Minister* 33
Med.21. *On the golden Calf and brazen Serpent* 36
Med.22. *On the Circulation of the blood* 39
Med.23. *On a multiplying Glass* 41
Med.24. *On Gravity and Levity* 43
Med.25. *On False Mediums* 45
Med.26. *On the Royal Oak* 48
Med.27. *On the Weapon-Salve* 53
Med.28. *On the Rudder of a Ship* 56
Med.29. *On the Balsome Tree* 60
Med.30. *On the palpitation of the heart* 63
Med.31. *On the shadow of a man* 66
Med.32. *On the moulting of a Peacock* 68
Med.33. *Upon a Pleasure Boat* 71
Med.34. *Upon putting out a Candle* 74
Med.35. *On a Prison* 76
Med.36. *On the motion of the Sun on a Dial* 79
Med.37. *On a Sun Dial and a Clock* 82
Med.38. *On the payment of a Pepper-corn* 84
Med.39. *On the Bucket and the Wheel* 87
Med.40. *On Banishment* 90
Med.41. *On the Breast and the Sucking babe* 94
Med.42. *Upon mixtures* 98
Med.43. *Upon Time and Eternity* 101
Med.44. *On a Physicians feeling the pulse* 106
Med.45. *On a Bee-hive and a Wasps nest* 109
Med.46. *On Contentment, and Satisfaction* 113
Med.47. *On Perching a piece of Cloth* 117

Med. 48. *On a Grave newly made.* 119
Med. 49. *On a Spring in a high ground.* 125
Med. 50. *On the vanity of Wishes.* 129
Med. 51. *On First fruits and Gleanings.* 134
Med. 52. *On a Rock.* 139
Med. 53. *On a counterfeit piece of Coin.* 143
Med. 54. *On health of body and peace of conscience.* 147
Med. 55. *On a Looking glass.* 152
Med. 56. *On going up an high Mountain.* 157
Med. 57. *On the Bible.* 162
Med. 58. *On the Spiritual Warfare.* 169
Med. 59. *On going to Bed.* 174
Med. 60. *On the natural heat, and the radical moysture.* 178

The Contents of the Wiles of Satan.

Chap. 1. Page

Containing an Introduction to the words, and division of them. 1

Chap. 2.

Containing the main Proposition, and sum of the Discourse. 7

Chap. 3.

Wherein is shewed the great ability of Satan to tempt, in six Sections.

Sect. 1.

The Contents.

Sect. 1. *Because in his nature he is a spiritual and intellectual essence* 11

Sect. 2. *From the duration and long experience of the devil* 18

Sect. 3. *Because it is the only business he hath to do* 25

Sect. 4. *Because of the number of the evil Spirits, and the unity of their Counsels* 29

Sect. 5. *From his great and strange Artifice to convey suggestions to evil, in such a manner, as they cannot be distinguished from the lustings of our own hearts* 33

Sect. 6. *From the suitableness between his suggestions, and corrupt reason.* 37

Chap. 4.

Containing an enumeration of some of Satans Wiles in twenty two Sections.

Sect. 1. *To tempt by method, and by the practice of lesser sins, to make way for the more facile committing greater* 40

Sect. 2. *A vexatious and restless importunity in urging to the doing that sin he tempts to* 47

Sect. 3. *A ceasing to tempt, and faining a flight* 52

Sect. 4. *Touching Satans policy about the end and the means* 57

Sect. 5. *His strange and artificial disguising objects* 63

Sect. 6. *Ensnaring of all sorts of Persons in the use of lawful things* 67

Sect. 7.

Sect. 7. *Suiting his temptations to the Ages and Conditions of men* 69
Sect. 8. *The insinuation of many suggestions in an undiscernable way, that we cannot difference them from our own thoughts* 70
Sect. 9. *The drawing men aside by plausible opinions, and Doctrines, that come near the Scriptures in shew* 72
Sect. 10. *Under pretence of setting up the Spirit to cry down the Word* 76
Sect. 11. *His working many lying signs and wonders* 78
Sect. 12. *His assaulting with temptations to our knowledge, and experience unheard of* 79
Sect. 13. *His Wiles about holy duties* 80
Sect. 14. *His suffering false remedies to prevail* 82
Sect. 15. *His making false Syllogisms by which he works upon the guilt of conscience* 83
Sect. 16. *His perswading Christians to keep his counsel* 85
Sect. 17. *Assaulting us in such temptations wherein we least suspect our selves* 86
Sect. 18. *Satans flattering us with hopes of returning out of sin by speedy repentance* 86
Sect. 19. *To keep the wounds of the soul raw and smarting* 87
Sect. 20. *To draw aside the soul to some sin when it is in the pursuit of some great mercy, or near the enjoyment of it* 87

Sect. 21. *To make the duties of a Christians general and particular calling interfere* 88
Sect. 22. *To bring us from one extream to another* 89

Chap. 5.

Wherein are laid down several Antidotes against the Wiles of Satan.

Sect. 1. Antidote 1. *Christian Sobriety, and Watchfulness* 91
Sect. 2. Antidote 2. *Resolution, and Christian courage* 93
Sect. 3. Antid. 3. *Make use of the Lord Jesus Christ* 95
Sect. 4. Antid. 4. *Be abundant in the use of prayer* 101
Sect. 5. Antid. 5. *Take heed of giving place to the devil* 103
Sect. 6. Antid. 6. *Take heed of venturing upon the occasions of sin, and coming near the borders of temptation* 104
Sect. 7. Antid. 7. *Diligence and industry in your Calling* 106
Sect. 8. Antid. 8. *Sincerity of heart* 107
Sect. 9. Antid. 9. *What is profitable to the enemy, is hurtful to you, and what hurts him helps you* 109
Sect. 10. Antid. 10. *Have an eye often to Scripture encouragements* 109

Errata.

Page 58. line 23. read *fruitur*. p. 176. l. 10. r. *fialefs*.
The rest the Reader is desired to mend as he observes them.

The Spiritual Chymist,
OR
Divine Meditations on severall Subjects.

Meditation I.

Upon a mote in the Eye.

OF what a strange temper is the *Eye*, which a smal *mote* can so extreamly trouble, and a wide *world* cannot satisfie? and what a strange vanity is the *world*, a *single* dust of which is more powerfull to afflict and torment, then an *entire confluence* of all its pleasures can be to give ease, or to delight? For were the globe of the whole earth turned into a delicious *Paradise*, that the eye might behold nothing but a perpetual spring of beauty, and that every sense might be continually feasted with the choicest objects that such a Garden could produce; yet alass a *corn* of its sand, an *atome* of its dust put or lodged accidentally in the eye, would create such violent shootings, such keen prickings and burnings, as would soon force a man to send forth com-

plaints that his anguish is far above his pleasure, and that he had much rather forgoe the one, then undergoe constantly the other. Oh! what a weak and empty bubble is all worldly happiness, which breaks and vanisheth into nothing, by the power of a small dust? and what a matchless difference is there between heavenly and earthly comforts, when a drop of the one can sweeten a briny sea of sorrow, and a world of the other cannót asswage the anguish which ariseth from a single mote? Lord therefore let not me be among the number of those that receive their good things in this life, I ask only a *pittance* for my *passage*, but not an *abundance* for my *portion* in them; yea though thou shouldst give me no Kid to make merry with, yet will I not murmur at thy bounty to *Prodigals*, if thou wilt say Son, all that is *laid up* is thine, though thou hast little or nothing of what is *laid out*; but I will pray, Turn Lord mine eyes from beholding, and my heart from affecting earthly vanities, and fix all my desires upon heaven, that I may look and long for it, in which there is nothing that can offend; but every thing that will delight and satisfie to Eternity.

Meditation II.

Upon a piece of Battered Plate.

IT is methinks a meet Emblem of a suffering Saint, who by afflicting strokes may lose somewhat of his *accidental beauty*; but nothing of his *real worth*. In the Plate the *fashion* is only marred; but the *substance* is neither diminished or embased. If you bring it to the

the *Scale*, it weighs as much as it did; if you try by the *Touchſtone*, it is as good Silver as it was. And is it not thus with a Saint when bruiſed and broken with many ſore preſſures? His luſtre and repute with men may be preiudiced and eclipſed by them, but not his *perſon* or his *worth* with God; if he be weighed in his unerring *Ballance*, he will not be found the lighter; if examined by his *Teſt*, he will not be eſteemed the leſs precious. It is not the *Croſs* that makes vile, but *Sin*; not the *paſſive evils* which we ſuffer, but the *active evils* which we do. The one may render us *unamiable* to men, but the other makes us *unholy* before God; The one raſe the *Casket*, and the other makes a *flaw* in the *Jewel*. Happy and wiſe therefore is that man who maketh *Moſes* his choice to be his pattern in chuſing Affliction rather than Sin; eſteeming it better to be an oppreſſed *Hebrew* that builds the Houſes and Pallaces of Brick, than an uncircumciſed *Egyptian* to dwell in them, for when he is tried he ſhall receive the Crown of life which the Lord hath promiſed to them that love him.

Meditation III.

Upon the Galaxia *or milky-way.*

THe *milkie way*, according to *Ariſtotle*, is a *ſhine* or *Brightneſs* cauſed by the joynt raies of a multitude of imperceptible Stars, and not a *Meteor*; But it is not my purpoſe ſo much to find out, or determine what it is, as to meditate a little upon the place where it is. The Milkie way is in Heaven, the true *Canaan* and

Land of Promiſe, in which Rivers of pleaſure and ſweetneſs do everlaſtingly overflow; and while we are abſent from it, we are like *Iſrael* in the Deſart, apt to complain of dayly wants, and to be diſcouraged with various fears. How greatly therefore is it becoming us who profeſs to ſeek ſuch a Country to long earneſtly after it in our deſires, and to travel towards it in patience; not fearing the difficulty of the way, but animating our ſelves with the perfection of the end, in which reſt and *glory*, which are here divided, ſhall both meet, and for ever dwell together? If *Mare rubrum*, the *Red Sea* of Affliction, be the paſſage; *Via lactea*, the milkie way of life, and bliſſe will be the end. And is it not better to wade through a Sea of bloud to a Throne of glory, than to glide along the ſmooth ſtream of pleaſure unto an Abyſſe of endleſs miſery? A good end gives an amiableneſs to the means, though never ſo unpleaſing; The bitter Potion which brings health is gladly taken down by the Patient: But Poyſon in a golden Cup, when made as pleaſing as Art and Skill can temper it, can never be welcome to any who underſtand the ſweetneſs of life, or dread the terrour of death. The way is good (ſaith *Chryſoſtome*) if it be to a Feaſt, though through a blind Lane; if to an Execution not good, though through the *faireſt Street* of the City; himſelf was bidden to a Marriage Dinner, and was to go through divers Lanes and Allies, croſſing the high ſtreet he met with one led thorow it to be Executed, he told his Auditors, *Non qua, ſed quo*, not the way, but the term *whither* it led, was to be thought upon. Lord then let not me be anxious what the path is that I tread, whether it be plain or thorny, pleaſant or difficult, bloudy or milky, ſo it lead to thee, who art *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the ending

of

of blessedness, but to walk chearfully in it till I come to thee my everlasting rest.

Meditation IV.

Vpon a Picture and a Statue.

IN what a differing manner is the Image and representation of the same Person brought into these two pieces of Art? In the one it is effected by the soft and silent touches of the Pensill, which happily convey *likeness* and *beauty* together: In the other it is formed by the rough and loud strokes of the hammer, and by the deep cuttings and Sculptures of Instruments of Steel: In as strange and far differing way is the heavenly Image of God formed in the souls of new Converts, when first made partakers of the Divine Nature. In some God *Paints* (as I may so speak) his own Likeness by a still and calm delineation of it upon the Table of their hearts: In others he *Carves* it by afflicting them with a great measure of terrours, and wounding their souls with a thorough sense both of the guilt and defilement of Sin. But in this diversity of working, God is no way necessitated, or limited by the disposition and temper of the matter, as other Agents are; but is freely guided by the Counsel of his own will, which is the sole rule and measure of all his Actions towards the Creature, as his Word is of theirs towards him. Lord therefore do with me what thou pleasest; Let me be but thine, and I will not prescribe thy Wisdom the way to make me thine; *bruise, breake, wound*, yea, *kill*, Lord, so that I may be made alive

again by thy power, and bear thy holy Image, according to which I was first made, and to which by thy grace and might only I can be restored.

Meditation V.

Vpon a Graff.

IT was an ancient Saying of the Rabbins, *Lumen supernum nunquam descendit sine indumento*, that Divine Light doth never descend without some Cloathing: While we are vailed with Mortality Truth must vail it self too, that it may the better sute our capacity, for in this our imperfect Estate, its native *Lustre* is too excessive for our weak eyes, and its spiritual *being* too refined for our narrow understandings, which do imbibe and take in their objects by the mediation of the sences with which they have contracted an entire league and amity. Observable therefore it is, that in Scripture the highest and most divine Mysteries of the Gospel are *imbodied* in the terrene Expressions of *Metaphors*, *Similitudes*, *Allegories*, and so represented to our view. Thus the efficacy and secresie of the *New Birth* is set forth by the *winds blowing* when and where it listeth; The *Resurrection* of the body by *Corn sown*, which is not quickned except it dye: The *Glory* of Heaven by a *Marriage Feast*: And among others, our *Mystical Union* with Christ by the *Insition of a Graff* into a forrain stock, which aptly shews forth the entire dependance we have upon Christ, without whom we can do nothing, and how also we that are at a distance from him, are truly made one with him. But yet methinks it

it is matter both of delight and wonderment, to ſee how much the *ſpiritual* implantation out-goes the *natural*. In the *natural*, *ſweet Graffs* are adviſed to be ſet in *ſowre Stocks*; for though it be proper to the Stock to be *vehiculum alimenti*, the conveyance of the nouriſhment, yet *virtus temperamenti*, the quality of the Juyce comes from the Graff, and not from the Stock. But in the *ſpiritual* it is quite otherwiſe, the Graff is vile and worthleſs, but the Root to which it is united is precious. The *Scion of a Crab* is put into a *tree of life*, the *wild Olive*, into the *true Olive*, and is thereby ſo changed as that it can no more degenerate into what it was, but ſhall for ever abide what the Almighty power of grace hath made it to be, a branch of righteouſneſs bringing forth the fruits of new obedience to the glory of him who hath made this bleſſed Change.

Meditation VI.

Vpon a Glaſs without a foot.

THat which chiefly renders this Glaſs of little or no eſteem is not the *Brittleneſs* of it, which is common to every Glaſs, but an *unaptneſs* for uſe and ſervice through a particular defect, in regard it hath only a capacity to receive what is put into it, and no ability to retain it unleſs ſome hand, or other forrain aide ſupply the place of a natural foot. In the hand it is uſeful to convey drink to the thirſty, or a Cordial to the Patient; but as ſoon as it is out of the hand through meer weakneſs it falls and ſpills the liquor, if

not ruine it self. O how lively doth this imperfect Glass resemble the best Condition of Believers on this side heaven, who in themselves are not only *brittle*, and so apt to be irrecoverably broken; but are also totally *unable* to retain either grace or comfort with which Christ is pleased to fill them, unless he bear and hold them alwaies in his hand? And O how great is the care and love of Christ, to preserve such Frail Creatures to life, and to honour such weak Instruments in his constant service? Who can think upon this goodness of Christ, and not be transported with Raptures and Ecstasies in the deep admiration of it? Who can believe that sure Salvation that is in him, out of whose hand no man can pluck us, and not passionately desire it? Is it not better with us, than it was with us in *Adam*, who had *Feet* to stand upright, but no *Hand* which might preserve him from falling? Freewill hath made many Servants, but hath it ever made one Son? Are not all that are saved Children of grace? Let others then magnifie Natures Power, and like sick men talk confidently of walking, when upon trial they cannot stand: I shall alwaies desire to have a due sense of my own emptiness and weakness, and to make this my dayly prayer, that Christ would alwaies fill me with his grace, hold me by his hand, and use me ever in his service.

Meditation

Meditation VII.

Upon the ſight of a Lilly and a Violet.

THeſe two Flowers brought to my Mind a ſaying of *Hierom* to this effect, *That it is better, and more honourable to be a Lilly then a Violet*: Which, when ſtripped of its Metaphorical Clothing comes to thus much, That, to be alwayes pure is more commendable, then to bear the bluſh of a Sin: Spotleſs Innocency doth far exceed the greateſt Penitency. A Truth queſtionleſs it is beyond Controverſie, and no way needing the aid of the School to determine, that *Innocens eſt præſtantior pœnitente*; The Innocent is more worthy then any Penitent. Innocency being the onely Robe of Glory, with which Man was covered when firſt Created; and of which, had he not diveſted himſelf, he had never experienced *Shame*, or *Sorrow*; they both being Paſsions that had their entrance into the World with Sin, and ſhall in the ſame Moment with it Die and Expire. But yet next to this *Virgin Purity from Sin*, *The moſt deſirable thing is true and unfeigned Penitency for Sin*; Which, though it cannot reſtore a Man to his Primitive State; Time Loſt, and Innocency, being two irrecoverable things; yet it will (through Gods Ordination) abundantly capacitate him for Mercy and Pardon. When *Ephraim* Smote upon the Thigh, and was aſhamed, becauſe he bare the reproach of his Youth, how earneſtly did God remember him: *Is Ephraim my dear Son?* When the *Prodigall* returns a *Penitent*, how affectionately doth his Father embrace him, and falling upon his Neck kiſs him? how doth he

be cut off, and prevent a part of his Confeſſion, which he was purpoſed with himſelf to have made, by his ſpeedy calling for the *Ring*, the *Robe*, the *Shooes*, to adorn him, and the *fatted Calf* to Feaſt him? O bleſſed Lord! how willingly would I therefore (who have nothing of the unſpotted purity of the *Lilly*) partake plentifully of the Tincture of the *Violet*? how fain would I, who have had a *Forehead* to commit Sin before thee, have a Face to bluſh for Sin done againſt thee? my *Sins* are as the ſand of the Sea for number, O that my *Teares* were as the *Water* of the Sea for abundance. But who, Lord, can make me of a Proud and unhallowed Sinner, a real and Broken Convert but thy ſelf? That Grace, by which mine whole Man muſt be moulded to a Penitential Frame, is altogether thine: heart, hand, eyes, tongue, cannot in the leaſt move without thee: they are lifeleſs Members till thou quicken them; yea Rebellious till thou ſubdue them: do thou therefore by a powerful Energy fit every part for its proper Duty; let my *hand* ſmite the Breaſt, as the fountain and root from whence all mine Iniquities do ſpring; let my *tongue* confeſs them, mine *eye* mourn for them, my *face* bluſh, and my *heart* bleed for them: then ſhall I unfeignedly ſay, and acknowledge, *My ruin is from my ſelf, but in thee is my help O Lord.*

Meditation VIII.

Upon a Crum going the wrong way.

WHat more mean and contemptible thing can there be then a *ſingle Crum*, either in regard of its doing the leaſt hurt, or effecting the leaſt good; and yet, like the Tongue, which St. *James* ſaith, is a little Member, *extollit ſeſe*, it boaſteth great Matters: in the *Mouth* (it is true) it hath ſcarce ſubſtance enough to be felt; but, in the *Throat*, it is ſuch as can hardly be endured. If it deſcend into the Stomach, it can contribute nothing to the ſupport of Life; but, if it miſs the due paſſage to it, how often doth it threaten Death? and ſometimes alſo effect it: O, how frail and mutable is the Life of Man; which is not only Jeopardied by Inſtruments of War and Slaughter, which are made to deſtroy, but by an *Hair*, a *Raiſin-Stone*, a *Feather*, a *Crum*, and a thouſand ſuch inconſiderable things, which have a power to extinguiſh Life, but none to preſerve it? How neceſſary then is it to get Grace into the Heart, when the Life that we have hangs thus continually in ſuſpence before us? and, how circumſpect ſhould we be of ſmall ſins, which create as great dangers to the Soul, as the other things can to the Body? They that live in the Pale of the Church periſh more by ſilent and Whiſpering Sins, then by Crying and Loud Sins, in which, though there be leſs *Infamie*, there is oftimes the greater danger, in regard they are moſt eaſily fallen into, and moſt hardly repented of; like knots in fine Silk, which are ſooner made then in a Cord

Cord or Cable, but with far more difficulty are unloosed again. Let us therefore (who often say that a Man may live of a little) think also of how much less a Man may Die, and miscarry, not in his Body only but in his Soul also.

Meditation IX.

Upon two Lights in a Room.

WHat an *Amicable*, as well as *Amiable* thing is Light? for, these two Tapers which enlighten the same Room, do not shine with a *Divided*, or with a *Confounded*, but with an *United* Light, as the *Opticks* do clearly demonstrate by the distinct shadowes which they cast: and yet the Eye which is benefitted by both of them, to a more full and perfect discerning of its objects, cannot difference the raies and strictures that flow from them, or assigne, which is the Light that comes from the one, or from the other. Such I have sometimes thought is the Harmony between the *Natural Light of Gifts*, and the *Supernatural of Grace*, meeting in the same Person; though they be both differing in the Original, yet in the Subject, in which they are seated, they shine not with a *Divided*, or a *Confounded*, but with an *United* Light: and, in their Efflux and Emanation so conspire, as that they greatly better him in whom they are conjoyned, and cast a mutual lustre also upon each other: One being as the *Gold* which adornes the Temple, and the other as the *Temple* which sanctifies the Gold. Let no Man therefore despise the Light of Gifts, as needless to the Perfection

Perfection of a Christian; nor yet so magnifie it as to be injurious to the Light of Grace, no more then he would put out one of his Eyes as useless, because when he winks with the one, he can see as well with the other: there may be a reason sometimes to shut one Eye, but there can be none at any time for to extinguish it.

Meditation X.

Upon Building after Fires.

IT is the saying of *Florus* the Historian concerning that fatal Fire of *Corinth*, in which all its Edifices were consumed into Ashes, and its Statues of Brass, Silver and Gold melted into one common Masse: *Æris notam pretiosiorem fecit ipsa opulentissima urbis Injuria*; That the Vastation of that wealthy City was an occasion to make the Mettal of it to be highly esteemed in after Ages. The like may be said concerning many Buildings, that the Flames which have turned them into desolate ruines, have occasioned a following beauty and stateliness in the second Fabricks, far above what the first ever had. How oft have we seen by such accidents the dimensions of Buildings inlarged, the Formes and Models of them much bettered, the whole with much more Art and Cost Enriched, so as to fill the beholders with delight and wonder? Can man thus improve disadvantages, and make Burnings and indigested heapes to serve as a Foile to his Art and Skill? can he effect a kind of Resurrection, and New-Birth to what was once destroyed? what then can God do,

do, whose power is perfected in weaknes, and like the Sun shines brightest when invironed with the blackest Clouds of difficulties? Surely he can, yea, and undoubtedly will give a being to the Bodies of his Martyrs, which the Fire hath consumed into Ashes, and the Wind hath scattered into distances. He will awake his Saints, who have made (for Age) their Beds in the Grave, and have filled their Mouthes with the Gravel and Slime of the Pit: He will call for his redeemed ones from out of the deep Sea, and from the Mawes of Fishes that have devoured them, and give to every one of them, not only the same *Specifical*, but the same *Numerical* Body, changed in its *Properties*, but not in its *Essence*, Clarified with Angelical Perfections, but not Transubstantiated from a Corporeal to a Spiritual substance: Is not all this done already in Christ? our Nature in his Body is *Spiritualized*, to tell us, that for possibility it may be, and for certainty it shall be so in us. He is our *Brother*, therefore we may be like him; and he is our *Head*, therefore we must be like him in a Conformity to his Glorious Body. Why therefore should I fear the greatest Enemies of Life, the *Fire*, the *Grave*, or the *Sea*? Is there any thing too hard for God? is not his Power and his Promise ingaged to do that for me which he hath done for my Saviour? hath he not said that those that sleep in Jesus he will bring with him? Lord help me to make it my onely care to have my Life Holy, that my Resurrection may be happy; to live to Christ, that I may live with Christ; and from a *Netherlander* in the dust below, may be made a *Citizen* of the New *Jerusalem* which is above, and rejoyce in the joy of thy People, and glory with thine Inheritance.

Meditation

Meditation XI.

Upon the Torrid Zone.

WHen I think, or read what ſtrange Deſcriptions the Ancients have made of the *Middle*, or *Burning Zone*, which, in regard of its exceſſive Ardours, they judged altogether inhabitable: and how much experience hath evinced their ignorance, in aſſerting the healthful, temperate, and pleaſant Dwellings that are to be found there. I cannot but Parallel them with the Miſreports that Carnal Men, through blindneſs of Mind, or Pravity of Heart have taken up, and ſpread abroad of the wayes of Religion and Holineſs, rendering them to the World leſs tolerable then the Scorchings of the moſt *Torrid Zone*, and more dreadful then a Howling *Deſart*. Such which require Auſterity, and admit no Latitude; ſuch which by continual Conflicts make Watery Cheekes, and bleeding Hearts, and what not; which may ſerve as a Flaming Sword to deter any from entering upon the Confines of an Holy Life. But, is it not matter of Wonder, that Experience, which puts an end to all Contradictions that can riſe up againſt it, and ſtops the Mouthes of Gainſayers, ſhould not ſilence thoſe unjuſt Calumnies that have been long caſt upon Religion by ſuch Men who ſpeak evil of thoſe things which they know not? Can there be any thing more unreaſonably charged upon it then that which is contrary to the experience of Believers? *Honey* may as well ceaſe to be Sweet, becauſe the Sick Man ſaith it is Bitter, as the Pathes of Holineſs to be Pleaſant, becauſe Carnal Men affirm them

them to be irkſome and difficult: and the Sun may be as well accuſed of Darkneſs, becauſe Dim and Purblind Eyes can ſee little or nothing of the light of it. Let them be asked who have Sequeſtered themſelves from the Vanities of the World that they might enjoy God and themſelves the better, whether they have wanted that ſatisfaction which they expected? or have miſſed what they have left? or have cauſe to complain of what they endure? And they will tell ſuch Queſtioniſts that they have not *left* their Delights, but *exchanged* them; that Religion is *Joyful*, though not *Diſſolute*; that it hath its *Songs*, though not its *Frolicks*; that a good Conſcience can *Feaſt* it alwayes, though it cannot *Revell* it; that Gods Service is *Free*, though not *Lawleſs*; that they can do what is *Decent*, *Expedient*, or *Lawfull*, though not what is *Sinfull*. How vain then are the Cavils, with which Worldlings, like malicious *Elimeſſes* pervert the ſtrait wayes of God? And, how cauſeleſs are the Scornes which they poure forth upon thoſe that walk in them? will they not at length (like the Drivel of thoſe that ſpit againſt the Wind) return upon their own Faces? or like Arrowes ſhot up againſt the Sun, fall upon thoſe that undertake ſuch vain attempts? Lord, though many will not believe what others have ſeen and teſtifie, yet let not me ever diſavow, what thou haſt been pleaſed to let me ſee and know: But, let me alwayes confidently ſay with *David*, *I have ſeen an end of all Perfection, but thy Commandements are exceeding broad.*

Meditation

Meditation XII.

Upon ſtrength and length in Prayer.

VVHen *Cicero* was asked which of *Demoſthenes* his Orations he thought *beſt*, he wittily replyed, the *longeſt*. But, if the queſtion ſhould be, which of Prayers are the beſt, the anſwer then muſt not be, the *longeſt*, but the *ſtrongeſt*: not the Prayer that *exceeds* in *quantity*, but that which *excells* in *quallity*. In Morall actions the Manner of working is a Swaying Circumſtance; a Man may ſin in doing good, but not in doing well: how few then are there which manage this duty of holy Prayer aright? Some miſtake the Language of Prayer, and think it conſiſts of nothing elſe then the cloathing of their meaning in apt expreſſions, with a tuneable delivery of it: Others preſume, that if neceſſity have put an edge upon their Requeſts, and ſtirred up ſome paſſions of Self-love, that they cannot fail of acceptance. Others again put much in the length of their Prayers, meaſuring them by the *time* which is ſpent, rather then by the *intention* which is exerciſed in them. But alaſs, how wide are all ſuch apprehenſions from the truth? and how fruitleſs will ſuch duties be to thoſe that are no otherwiſe buſied in them? The Prayer, which is as delightful Muſick in Gods Eares, is not that which hath the quaint Notes of the *Nightingale*, but that which hath the mournful Tones of the *Dove*. Broken ſighs and groans are the beſt Eloquence with God, and become Prayer; as unexpected *ſtops* and *reſts* (made by Muſicians) do grace the Muſick with a kind of Harmonical *Apoſiopeſis*, or *Eliplis*; it is not the Prayer that *Indigency* and natural *deſires* do

 ſharpen

ſharpen, but which the *Spirit* doth enliven that is prevalent with God. The one is as the *cry* of the young *Ravens*, and the other is as the *voice* of *Children* that are taught to cry *Abba*, Father. It is not the many words of a proud *Phariſee* that obtain the bleſſing, but the pithy and ſhort Confeſſion of a penitent *Publican*, who is ſent away juſtified. *Ah Father!* may ſometimes be more effectual with God, who ſearcheth the hearts, and knoweth the mind of the Spirit, than a prayer that is ſtretched forth like an Evening ſhadow to a wonderful length. The one, though it be ſhort, may, like a ſmall *figure* in a Number, ſtand for much: and the other, though great, like a volume of *Cyphers*, may ſignifie nothing. Let therefore ſuch who are frequent in the duty of prayer, eſpecially *young Converts*, who are apt to think above what is meet of their own enlargements, endeavour to turn their *length* into *ſtrength*, and to remember that there is a wide difference between the *gift* and *grace* of prayer, and that it is one thing to have *Commerce* with God in duties, and another to have *Communion* with him; The one is ſuch which ſtrangers may have in their mutuil traffick, but the other is proper to friends, who are knit together in love.

Meditation XIII.

Vpon the Morning Dew.

THe Meditation of this Subject is no leſs facile than delightful, like *Jacobs* Veniſon, it is ſoon come by, becauſe God hath brought it to my hand, having

having often in his Word resembled the *Dew*, (which makes the earth fruitful,) *to his Grace*, that makes the hearts of men, naturally barren, to bring forth fruits of righteousness; so that it is no difficult task for to draw an useful parallel between the one and the other in sundry respects.

The Dew is of an *heavenly original*, the nativity thereof is from the womb of the Morning, it tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the Sons of men. And is it not thus in the grace of Conversion? Is not that wholly from above, without any Preparations, Congruities, Concurrencies, that do or can arise from the flesh? We are made *active* by grace, but we are not at all *Agents* in fitting our selves for Grace. As no man can be antecedently active to his *first* birth; so neither can he be to his *second* birth: Of Gods own Will we are begotten by the Word of Truth.

The Dew also in its descent and fall is silent and imperceptible, it flies every sense of which it may seem to be a proper object. It is so subtle, as that the sharpest eye cannot see it; so silent, as that the quickest ear cannot hear it; and so thin, as that the naked hand cannot feel it. When it is come it is visible, but how it comes who can tell? After such a secret manner oft times are the illapses of the Spirit, and the operations of his grace upon the heart; his *Teachings*, his *Tractions*, his *Callings* are all efficacious to *draw*, to *perswade*, yet the way is hidden, and the soul, ere ever it is aware, is made like the Chariots of *Aminadab*.

The Dew again, as *Naturalists* observe, is most abounding in calm and serene seasons, when the Heavens are least disturbed with winds and storms; *Ros est humidum quid à serenitate concretum minutatim labens*;

it is a moysture drawn up by the Sun in the day, and then falling by ſmall innumerable drops in the night. And is it not thus in the grace of God? Are not thoſe hearts refreſhed moſt with it, that are leaſt diſquieted with Earthly Cares, and toſſed too and fro with Anxieties? Are not ſuch, like *Gideons* Fleece, plentifully wet with the Evidences of Gods love, when others, like the ground about it, are wholly dry?

Laſtly, The Dew is of a growing and reviving nature, which brings a life and verdure to Fields, Vineyards, Gardens, Flowers, which the cold would chill, or the heat would ſcorch. Therefore when God promiſed to *Iſrael* the beauty of the *Lilly*, the ſtability of the *Cedar*, the fruitfulneſs of the *Olive*, to effect all this he ſaith, *he will be as the dew.* And what ground can but bring forth when he who is the Father of the Rain, and begetteth the drops of the dew, ſhall himſelf deſcend upon it in bounty and goodneſs? Who can but love him with a love of *duty*, whom he ſhall thus tender with a love of *mercy*? Who can but love him with a love of *Concupiſcence*, as being more deſirous of new *Influences*, than ſatisfied with former *Receipts*, whom he ſo freely loves with a love of *Beneficence*? O Lord, my Soul thirſteth for thee as the gaping and chapped earth doth for the moyſture of the Heavens; I am nothing, I can do nothing without thee; my *fruitfulneſs*, my *growth*, my *life* depend wholly upon the droppings of thy grace; when thy dew lieth all night upon my Branch, my glory is freſh in me, and my whole man is as the ſmell of a field which the Lord hath bleſſed. Be not therefore unto me, O my God, as a Cloud without Rain, leſt I be as a Tree without fruit. But let thy grace alwaies diſtill upon me as the dew, and as the ſmall rain upon the tender herb, and

then

then shall I be as the ground, which drinketh in the showers that come oft upon it, and bringeth forth fruit meet for him by whom it is dressed, and receive also new blessing from God.

Meditation XIV.

Upon a Pearl in the Eye.

WHat specious names have Physicians put upon diseases, who call a *Plague Sore* a *Carbuncle*, and the *white film*, which taketh away the *delightful sight*, a *Pearl in the Eye*? Do they gild over Diseases, as they do their *Pills*, or a *Bolus*, that so their Patients may less fear and feel the evil of the one, as they less taste the bitterness of the other? And are any by such slender Artifices brought into an opinion that a *Carbuncle* is less mortal or loathsome than any other swelling that hath not so gay a name? Or that blindness which is caused by a *Pearl in the Eye*, is more comfortable than the loss of sight that comes by other accidents? Methinks Reason should not run at so low an ebb in any, as to please themselves in such fancies; may not a *Poyson* have a *name* that sounds better to the ear; a *colour* more pleasing to the eye, and a taste that is more grateful to the Pallate, than the *Antidote* which expels it? May not *Alchimy* glister when *Gold* looks pale? And yet alas! in spiritual maladies, in which the danger is so much the greater by how much the soul is of more value than the body; with what strange delusions are many transported? who when their minds are poysoned with Errour and Blasphemy,

do then put upon their corrupt Opinions and Tenents, the glorious names of *Revelations*, *Visions*, *Raptures*, *refined notions*, and what not, that may confirm themselves in their own dotages, and win others into an admiration of their persons. Thus *Montanus* gave out himself to be the *Comforter* that Christ had promised to send forth into the World. *Arius* proudly boasted, that God had revealed something to him, which he hid from his Apostles. And *Eunomius* fondly imagined that he was taken up to Heaven, as *Elias* was; and had seen Gods face, as had *Moses*, and was wrapt up to the third heaven, as was *Paul*. But what other thing are these Follies, or rather Phrensys, than as if an *Israelite* infected with the botch of *Egypt*, and overspread with it from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, should boast that he had robbed the *Egyptians* of their most precious Jewels, and had decked himself with them? Would not men pitty his distemper, rather than believe his confidence? Would not they offer medicines to heal him, rather than suffer him to perish under his miserable delusion of possessing great riches? How is it then that in matters of faith, in which there is both clear evidence and certainty, Hereticks, that are no other than ulcerous persons, fitter for Dogs to lick than Christians to love, should throughout all Ages so easily gain to themselves such a great multitude of Proselytes only by putting fair Names upon foul Errours? It is because men for their lusts sake will not see, but willingly corrupt themselves in those things which they know? or is it because God hath smitten them with a spirit of blindness that they shall not see, for their not receiving of the truth in the love of it? Surely, whatever the cause be, such is the infatuation, as that I had need both to *tremble*, and to

pray:

pray: To *tremble*, at the ſad woe which is denounced by God himſelf againſt thoſe that *call evil good, and good evill; That put bitter for ſweet, and ſweet for bitter.* And to *pray*, as *David* did, *Teach me thy way O Lord, I will walk in thy truth, unite my heart to fear thy name.*

Meditation XV.

Vpon Spiritual and bodily ſickneſs.

THe ſoul hath its maladies, as well as the body; and ſuch that for their likeneſs to them, do often borrow their names from them. *Pride*, is a *Timpany*; *Avarice*, a *Dropſie*; *Security*, a *Lithargy*; *Luſt*, a *Calenture*; *Apoſtacy*, an *Epilepſie*. And yet (though theſe names of *bodily* diſeaſes do happily ſerve to point and ſhadow out the nature of *ſpiritual*) how wide is the difference between the Patients of the one and of the other, in regard of thoſe qualities which may diſpoſe them for a cure and recovery out of them? In the diſeaſes of the body it matters not whether the Patient know the name of his diſeaſe, or underſtand the vertue of the medicines which are preſcribed, or be able to judge of the *increaſe*, *height*, and *declination* of his diſtempers by the beatings of his pulſe; the whole buſineſs is managed by the care and wiſdom of the Phyſician, who oft times conceals the danger on purpoſe leaſt *fear* and *fancy* ſhould work more than his Phyſick, and hinder the benefit of what he applies. But in the maladies of the ſoul it is far otherwiſe; the firſt ſtep unto ſpiritual health is a diſtinct and clear

insight of sin, such which makes men to understand the Plague of their own hearts; Christ heals by *light*, as well as by *Influence*; he first *Convinceth* them of sin, and then gives the *pardon*, he discovers the *disease* to them, and then administers the *medicine*. Ignorance is a bar to the welfare of the soul, though not of the body, and makes the divine remedies to have as little effect upon it, as Purges or Cordials have upon the Glasses into which they are put. It is *Solomons* peremptory Conclusion, that a soul without knowledge is not good, nor indeed can be, because it wants a principle, which is as necessary to goodness as a visive power to the eye to enable it to discern its object. How can he ever value holiness who understands not what sin is? Or desire a Saviour who hath no sence of his need? O therefore, blessed Lord, do thou dayly more open my eyes, that I may see my self to be among the *sinners*, and not among the *righteous*; among the *sick*, and not among the *whole*; that so I may be healed by thee, who camest not to *call* the righteous, but sinners to repentance; nor to *save* the whole, but the sick. Be thou my *Physician*, and let me be thy *Patient*, untill thou makest me to say, I am not sick, because thou hast forgiven me all mine iniquities.

Meditation XVI.

Upon a Lamp and a Star.

SUch is the disparity between a *Lamp* and a *Star*, as that happily it may not a little be wondred at, why I should make a joynt Meditation of them which are so

ſo greatly diſtant in reſpect of *place*, and far more in reſpect of *quality*, the one being an *earthly*, and the other an *heavenly* body. What is a *Lamp* to a *Star* in regard of *influence*, *duration*, or *beauty*? Hath it any quickning raies flowing from it? Or is its light immortal, ſo as not to become deſpiſed by expiring? Can it dazle the beholder with its ſerene luſtre, and leave ſuch impreſſions of it ſelf upon the eye, as may render it for a time blind to any other objects? Alas! theſe are too high and noble effects for ſuch a feeble and uncertain light to produce, and proper only to thoſe glorious bodies that ſhine in the Firmament. But yet this great inequallity between the one and the other ſerves to make them both more meet Emblems of the differing eſtate of Believers in this and the other life, who in Scripture, while they are on this ſide Heaven, are compared to wiſe Virgins with *Lamps burning*, and when they come to Heaven, to *Stars ſhining*, which endure for ever and ever. Grace in the beſt of Saints is not perfect, but muſt, like a Lamp, be fed with new ſupplies that it go not out, and be often *trimmed* that it be not dim. Ordinances are as neceſſary to Chriſtians in this life as *Manna* to the *Iſraelites* in the wilderneſs though in *Canaan* it ceaſed; And therefore, God hath appointed his Word and Sacraments to drop continually upon the hearts of his Children, as the two Oſive trees upon the golden Candleſtick. What mean then thoſe fond conceits of *perfectiſts*, who dream of living above all ſubſidiary helps, and judge Ordinances as uſeleſs to them, as oyl for a Star, or a ſnuffing of the Sun to make it ſhine more bright? It is true, when we come to heaven ſuch things will be of no more uſe to our ſouls, than meat or drink will be to our bodies; but yet while we

are

are on the Earth, the body cannot live without the one, nor the ſoul without the other. Do thou therefore, holy God, preſerve in me a due ſenſe of my impotency and wants, whoſe light is *fading*, as well as *borrowed*, that ſo I may dayly ſuck ſupplies from thee, and acknowledge that I live not only by grace *received*, but by grace *renewed*, and while I am in this life, have light only as a *Lamp* in the *Temple*, which muſt be fed and trimmed, and not as a *Star* in *Heaven*.

Meditation XVII.

Vpon a Chancery Bill.

ONe cauſe and original can have but one orderly and genuine birth, elſe what means our *Saviours* queſtion, *Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thiſtles?* Or that of St. *James*, *Doth a fountain at the ſame place ſend forth water ſweet and bitter?* May it not then juſtly be the opinion and mind of many, that the leaſt fruit of any holy Meditation can never grow from ſuch a *bramble* of Contention as a *Chancery Bill?* And that from ſuch a ſpring of *Marah*, a ſweet and delightful ſtream can never iſſue? Yea, who will not be ready to take up *Nathanaels* queſtion, *Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?* And then what better anſwer can I return to ſuch than *Philips*, *Come and ſee?* And now let me ſay what I have often thought, That between ſuch a *Bill* and moſt mens *Confeſſions* of ſin in prayer, in which they implead themſelves to God, there is too great a likeneſs in this reſpect, that the complaints in both have more of *courſe* and *form* than

truth

truth and *reality*. In the one it is *Mos curiæ*, the usage and custome of the Court for the *Plaintiffe* to pretend *Fraud*, *Rapines*, *Combinations*, *Concealments* done and made to the prejudice of his right, which yet he never intends to prove against the *Defendant*, but only to make use of as a ground of inquiry. And is it not thus also in the other? Are there not in Prayer large Catalogues and Enumerations of sin, which many charge themselves with before God, as if it were their great work to justifie God in their self condemnation? *Pride*, *Wantonness*, *Hypocricy*, *Contumacy*, are the black, shall I say, or *Scarlet* sins, that are among others instanced in? And yet what other thing is intended by them than to make up the outside of a Prayer? These sins are only placed in it, as dark shadows in a Picture to set it off with more advantage, and to commend it rather to men than to God. In the doing of the duty they think not in the least the worse of themselves for what they say against themselves, nor would have others so to do; else how comes it to pass, that in charging themselves so deeply at Gods Tribunal, there is as little appearance of shame or sorrow in their face, as there was of a Cloud in the Heavens when *Elijahs* Servant returned this Answer, that there was nothing? Now though it be no part either of my work or purpose to justifie or condemn the practises of humane Judicatories, which admit loose suggestions, that are as Arrows shot at random, because that now and then they serve for a discovery: Yet I cannot but condemn and abhor that the confession of sin in prayer should be as slight and overly as the complaints of a *Chancery Bill*, and that particular sins specified in it, and aggravated with hainous Circumstances, should be no other than things of course, done rather to lengthen out the duty

than

then affect the heart; to discover quickness of Parts rather then truth of grace. What is this but to make Prayer it self, which should be as sweet Incense burning upon the Golden Altar, to be as an Offering of *Sulpher*, or *Assafœtida*? What is this but to mock God, the great searcher of the heart, with vain words, and to publish to the World how little they fear his anger, or vallue his pardon? for if the Confession of Sin be formal, how can the seeking of forgiveness be real? O holy Lord preserve me from such hypocrisie, and remember not what in this kind I have been guilty of: my desire is to judg my self, not in word, but in truth, and unfeignedly to beg, that I, who am in the court of thy justice wholly inexcusable, may in the *Chancery* of thy Mercy become altogether *inaccusable*.

Meditation XVIII.

Upon the Philosophers Stone.

THis *Lemma*, or Title may happily as much affect such who make Gold their God, as the sight of the Star did the Wise Men, hoping that it will be both a *light* and *guide* to the discovery of that rare and matchless secret, of turning the more base and inferiour Metralls into the more noble; *Iron* into *Silver*, and *Brass* into *Gold*, and so Enrich them with an *Artificial Indies*. But I can scarce resolve my self whether the *Philosophers Stone*, which is thus framed for wonders, be not rather a *Speculation* than an absolute *reallity*, or an *attempt* assayed by many, rather than an *Atchievment* attained by few or any: How many have melted down

Ample

Ample Revenues in their Crusibles, and while they have, with much labour, sought the *Sublimation* of Metals, have sunk themselves into the deepest beggery? and how have others consumed their time, if not wasted their Estates in a fruitless pursuit of it? and yet have seen no other change then what *age* and *care* hath made in themselves, by turning their *golden* hair into *silver* hair; or at the best have gleaned up some few Experiments onely, which have not Compensated their cost and travel. But, what if any Man, after long search and study, can *Archimedes* like cry out joyfully, that he hath found? Yea, what if every Man, who have busied his thoughts, and imployed his time in diving into this Mystery, should be able to effect such a Change, and to multiply his Treasure as the Sand? yet, how worthless and inconsiderable would such productions of his *Philosophical Stone* be found, if compared with the noble and transcendent effects of the *Divine*, or *Theological Stone*, which Christ promiseth in the *Revelation* to him that overcometh: whose worth, as it is far greater, so the way to obtain it is more facile and certain, it being not a *work* of labour, but a *gift* of grace. This *Stone* is of such power and energy, that whosoever is possessed of it, can have nothing befal him, which it changeth and turneth not to his good: it turneth all temporal losses into spiritual advantages; all crosses into blessings; all afflictions into comforts: it dignifies reproach and ignomy; it changeth the hardship of a Prison into the delights of a Pallace; it is an heavenly *Anodyne* against all paines, and makes the Soul to possess it self in patience in every condition. It is a *Panacea*, an universal Salve for every Sore, to all accidents that can befall a Man; It is as the Seal to the Wax, putting upon them a new stamp and figure,

and

and making them to be what they were not before, and what they never could have been without it. Such it is that he who hath it, hath all good: and he that wants it (whatever elſe he ſeemes to poſſeſs) hath little leſs then nothing. Who then can without *mourning* as well as *wondering*, think at the prodigious folly of thoſe Men, who labour in a continual fire to effect the Stone of the Tranſmutation of Mettalls, and yet deem this Divine Stone ſcarce worth the begging of God in a Prayer? Is this wiſdom to toile in the refining of Clay, and to be able to make a dull piece of Earth to ſhine, and then to value our happineſs by it? is this wiſdom to ſet a low rate upon what God hath promiſed to give, and highly to eſteem what we can do? O Lord, if this be the Worlds wiſdom, let me become a fool: I had rather have this Divine Stone of thy Promiſe, then all the Treaſures that Nature and Art can yield. Let the Mountains be turned into Gold, the Rocks into Diamonds, the Sands into Pearles, yet this Stone with the *New Name written in it*, is to me more deſirable then all, as being a ſure pledg of life and happineſs in heaven.

Meditation XIX.

Vpon a Greek Accent.

ACcents are by the *Hebrews* aptly called *Sapores*, Taſtes, or Savors, becauſe that Speech, or Words, without the obſervance of them, are like *Jobs* White of an Egg, without Salt, inſipid, and unpleaſant. In the Greek they derive their name from the due

due tenor, or tuning of words; and in that Tongue words are not pronounced according to the long or ſhort *vowels*, but according to the *accent* ſet upon them, which directs the *riſe* or *fall*, the *length* or *brevity* of their pronunciation; now, what *accents* are in the *Greek* to words, that methinks *circumſtances* are to ſins, which, as ſo many *Moral accents* do fitly ſerve to ſhew their juſt and certain dimenſions, and teach us aright to diſcern how great or ſmall they be: and he, that without reſpect had unto them, doth judge of the bigneſs of ſins, is like to erre as much as a Man that ſhould take upon him, without *Mathematical* Inſtruments, to give exactly the greatneſs of the Heavenly Bodies, and to pronounce of *Altitudes*, *Diſtances*, *Aſpects*, and other appearances, by the ſcantling of the *Eye*: Is not this the Scripture way to ſet out Sin, by the *Place*, *Time*, *Continuance* in it, and repetitions of it? doth not God thus accent *Iſraels* ſins by the *place* in which they were done? they provoked him at the *Red-Sea*, where they ſaw the mighty workes of his power, in making the deep to be their path to *Canaan*, and the *Ægyptians* Grave. They tempted him in the *Wilderneſs*, where their *Food*, *Drink*, *Clothes*, were all made up of Miracles; the Clouds yielding them Meat, the dry Rock Water, and their Garments not waxing old. Doth he not aggravate them, by the long ſpace of their continuance in them, in ſaying, that they grieved him fourty years? doth he not number the times of their Reiterated, Murmurings and Rebellions, and make it as a ground for his Juſtice to deſtroy them? Neceſſary therefore it is, that in the duty of Self-examination, and reviewes of the Book of Conſcience, we do not only read over the naked Facts which have been done by us, but that we look into thoſe *Apices peccati*, little

dots

dots and *tittles*, which are ſet upon the heads of many ſins (the Circumſtances I mean with which they were committed) or elſe we ſhall never read that book aright, or learn to know what ſins are great, or what ſmall. The Fact and the Circumſtance are both noted in the *Journals* of Conſcience, though they be not haply equally legible; and he that is truly penitent will make it a chief part of his work to find out one as well as the other, as being the beſt meanes both to get the heart broken for ſin, and from ſin. What ſhame? what fear? what carefulneſs? what revenge will a ſerious ſight of the ſeveral aggravations that meet in the perpetration of a ſin move and ſtir up in the heart of a ſinner? will he not ſay, what a beaſt am I to ſin thus againſt ſo clear light? to break ſo often my own vowes, to defer ſo long my Repentance and Riſing again? what revenge ſhall I now take of my ſelf to witneſs my Indignation? what carefulneſs ſhall I exerciſe to evidence the truth of my return? what diligence ſhall I uſe to redeem my loſt time, who have joyned the Morning of the Task, and the Evening of the day together? Theſe, and ſuch like thoughts, will ſin, when it is Read as it is Written, and Accented, in the Conſcience produce. But a general knowledg and ſight of it, without ſuch particularities, will neither make nor leave any impreſſions but what are both ſlight and confuſed. Do thou therefore, holy God, teach me to underſtand the errors of my wayes aright, and by the light of thy ſpirit make me to ſee that Circumſtances in ſins are not Motes, but Beames, and greatly intend their guilt, if not their bulke; That ſo I may mourn for thoſe ſins which Carnal Men conceive to be but ſo many black nothings; and abhor my ſelf for thoſe Corruptions in which they indulge themſelves.

Meditation

Meditation XX.

Vpon a debauched Minister.

IT is a Truth, though it hath been questioned by some, and denied by others, that the *Function* of a Minister, is Formally executed by Gifts, which are not made effectual by his *Personal Sanctity*, but by the *grace* of God in the hearer. The one may move *Morally*, but it is the other which worketh *Efficaciously*; and for any to conceive otherwise is a smatch of *Donatisme*, who made the validity of Ordinances wholly to depend upon the real goodness of those that Administred them; which opinion, if it were true, it must necessarily follow, that there must be an absolute knowledge in the People, of discerning unfeigned Grace in the heart of the Minister, from all pretended semblances and showes, or else what comfort can they have in the validity of his Acts, while this suspicion abides upon them; that is, if he be not really holy, all that he can do is no other then a Nullity? we must then distinguish between the *grace* of *gifts*, which God bestowes for the *good* of the *Church*, and the *gift* of *grace*, which he gives for the *good* of the Soul of him who is partaker of it: By the one of these a Man may become a Minister; but without the conjunction of both he can never be a *good Minister*. Holiness then, as it is that which no Man can be well without, so a Minister least of all; it being the great end of his Office to turn Men from sin to God, and to draw Men up from earth, yea from the danger of Hell to Heaven: And should

he not do what he Teacheth, and second his Doctrine with his Example: he must needs sin against his Calling, which alwayes heightneth the notoriety of the fact. No sins being so inexcusably sinfull, as those that are committed against Mens Callings: For a *Steward* to be a Thief, for a *Physician* to be a *Murderer*, for an *Ambassador* trusted with the Affairs of his Prince to be a *Traitour*, are Crimes of greater Infamy in them then in another. How then can the impieties of a Minister but be above all others, by so much the worst, by how much his Calling is above all others the best? what then can be more prodigious, then for him, who should be Gods Mouth to the People, to have his Tongue set on Fire of Hell, and not touched with a Coal from the Altar? or for him whom God hath honoured with that high imployment of winning Souls, to be an accursed Appollyon in undoing and destroying them by his nefarious and impure living: If he that shall break the least Commandment, and Teach Men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven, what then shall he be called who breaks the greatest Commandment, and Teacheth Men so? surely I scarce know what to call him, who hath of a *Minister* thus transformed himself into a Monster, he is not a *Star* in Christs *right hand*, but in the *Dragons Tail*, which drew many from Heaven and cast them down upon the Earth. He is amongst the Prophets, the *Simeon* rightly called *Niger*, not for his *Complexion*, but for his *Conversation*: he is in the House and Temple of God, not as the Priests which did bear the Ark, but as the Beasts which drew it and shook it. For, if the sins of any Man do loosen and endanger the Foundations of Christian Religion, it is the wickedness of Ministers, which makes many to question whether there be

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an *Heaven*, an *Hell*, or a *God*. And though it may posibly now and then fall out, that the Seed of Divine Truth, like Corn sown by a leprous hand, grow up into some fruit; yet how small is the good that is wrought by this Doctrine, to the great hurt that is done by the dissolute life of such a Minister? is it likely that he, who in the Pulpit pleads for honour to be given to Christs Person, obedience to be yielded to his Precepts, faith to be exercised in his Promises, and when he is out of it gainsayes all that he hath spoken in his sensual practises, should win many Disciples to Christ? will he be ever much hearkened unto who decries Drunkennes, Swearing, wantonnes, as the high-Rodes and Pathes to destruction, and yet turns not his own feet from walking in them? will it not be said unto him, Physician heal thy self? or, thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thy own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote that is in thy Brothers eye. But what ever the issue be, whether Men hearken, or not hearken, yet will the condition of such a Minister be most sad in the great day: if he be instrumental in the saving of any, yet they shall be none of his Crown or Joy, nor in the least extenuate his misery, but aggravate it, in that he hath been onely to them as a standing Statue, to point out the way to heaven, not a living Companion to walk with them in it. How much then will it augment his pains and anguish, when the blood of many misled and lost Soules must fall upon his head, and he be condemned as the cursed Murderer of them? O that these few words might prick the hearts of such, who have worn the *badg* of God, and yet done the Devils *work*, who have been his Servants by Office, and his Enemies by *Practice*, that they might timely think both of saving themselves and

others. However, bleſſed God, help me to do the *Office* of a Miniſter, and keep me from the puniſhment of a Miniſter. Pardon mine inabilities in thy Service, and deliver me from ſcandalous ſins. Enable me to bear Reproach for Chriſt, but let me never be a reproach to Chriſt, or his Goſpel.

Meditation XXI.

Upon the Golden Calfe, and the Brazen Serpent.

THe Makers of theſe two Images were *Moſes* and *Aaron*, ſuch a pair of Brethren as Hiſtory cannot parallel for Eminency, and whoſe Names out-ſhine greatly all others of the like alliance that have an honourable mention in the Book of God. Where are there two Brethren in that Sacred Chronicle, ſo renowned for ſundry Miracles done by them? or ſo highly dignified by Titles given to them by the Spirit of God as they? *Moſes* being ſtiled ſignally the *Servant of God*; and *Aaron*, the *Saint of the Lord*: and yet how ſtrangly differing are their two Images? they are unlike in the *Matter*; the one being of *Gold*, and the other of *Braſs*? unlike in the *Figure*, the one a *Calfe*, the other a *Serpent*: but moſt unlike in their *Effects*, the one *Killing*, and the other *Healing*. *Vitulus aureus occidit Serpens Æneus ſanat*: The Golden Calfe *that kills*, and the Brazen Serpent that *ſaves alive*. One would think that the ſame Fountain ſhould as ſoon ſend forth Salt Water and Freſh, as either of theſe to do any thing that

that ſhould terminate in ſuch contrary effects, by whoſe harmonious Conduct *Iſrael* had been led as a Flock of Sheep through the Wilderneſs. But what if their Actions did Jarr? yet, who could readily conceive that *Aarons* Calfe ſhould be as a deſtroying poyſon? or that *Moſes* his Serpent ſhould be as an effectuall Antidote to ſave alive? did he not flee from his Rod when turned into a Serpent, as fearing to be hurt by it? And was not this Brazen Serpent in ſhape and figure like to thoſe fiery Serpents, that had ſtung many *Iſraelites* to death? from whence then comes this ſtrange difference between the one and the other, is it not from hence? *Aarons* Calfe, though made of Gold, was without, yea againſt a command of God; but *Moſes* his Serpent, though of Braſs, was by his ſpecial appointment. Let the *Inſtitutions* of God be never ſo mean and deſpicable to the eye of ſenſe; yet they ſhall obtain their deſigned end: and let the *Inventions* of Men be never ſo rich and coſtly, yet they will be found to be no other then hurtful vanities. Who is of ſo ſmall an Inſight in the Myſtery of Idolatry and Superſtition, as not to obſerve how they affect a Pomp and Splendor in their Religion, as if when they had made it Gay, they had made it Good? and how greatly they deſpiſe the ſimplicity of that Worſhip which is not clothed and decked with an external Grandure? But will a Clove in the Mouth cure the unſavory breathings of corrupt Lungs? or will the Leper's making of himſelf brave with the fineſt Garments cauſe the Prieſt to pronounce him clean, when he comes to behold his Sore? then may ſuch arts and palliations of men, wedded to Idolatrous practiſes, vindicate the evil of their doings, and juſtifie them to be ſuch as God will not condemne. But as Religion is not a thing left to

any mans choice, to pick out from that diverſity, with which the World abounds, what beſt pleaſeth himſelf; ſo neither are the wayes and *Mediums* of the Exerciſe of it at all in his power. As God is the object of Worſhip, ſo the meanes by which he is honoured, and his ſervants benefited that uſe them, muſt be appointed by himſelf. His will and not mans muſt be the ſole and adæquate Rule. For all Ordinances do not work neceſſarily, as the Fire burns, or as the Sun enlightens the Air; nor do they work *Phyſically*, as having an inherent power to produce their effects; but they are operative, by way of Inſtitution, and receive their vertue from God, who therefore appoints weak and inſufficient things to the eye of Reaſon, that himſelf may be the more acknowledged in all. What could be more unlikely to heal the bitings of a fiery Serpent, then the looking up onely to a Brazen Serpent? or to reſtore to the blind Man his ſight, then the anointing of his eyes with Clay and Spittle? And yet theſe things God and Chriſt are pleaſed to make uſe of; not from *indigency*, as if they could not work without meanes, but from *Wiſdom* and *Councel*, to ſhew, that they can work by any: Let no Man then fondly make it his Work, or count it his duty to honour God with his Inventions, though ſpecious and beautiful in his own eyes; but let him value and prize Gods Inſtitutions, though to outward appearance they be contemptible. The Blew-Bottles, and other Weeds in the Field are more gaudy and delightful to the Eye than the Corn amongſt which they grow; but yet the one are worthleſs, and the other is full of ſtrength and nouriſhment.

Meditation

Meditation XXII.

Vpon the Circulation of the bloud.

THough it be no confeſſed Maxime, yet it is an opinion which many Phyſicians do confidently aſſert, that the motion of the bloud is Circular, and that the bloud which is in the feet hath a reflux back into the heart. But it is not for me, if there be a difference between thoſe who are of *the ſecrets of nature*, to undertake the deciſion of it leaſt it be ſaid to me, as it was to *Moſes*, when he mediated between the two *Iſraelites* that ſtrove, *Quis te conſtituit Judicem?* Who made you a Judge over us? I ſhall therefore turn my thoughts from it, unto the *circulation* which is in the *civil body* of Society, wherein the affections, habits, manners, as a kind of ſpiritual bloud, may be truly affirmed both to flow upward from the inferiour parts of it to the ſuperiour, and to deſcend again from the ſuperiour parts of it to the inferiour. But yet this diſproportion is to be obſerved, that the *Efluxes* both of good and evil which move downwards, are more quick and operative, than thoſe which aſcend from below upwards. Great perſons by their manners and carriage do ſooner make impreſſions upon perſons of a meaner rank than they are able to reflect back upon them again. This *Moral Circulation* therefore may teach thoſe who are as the noble and *Architectonical* parts of the civil body full of power and influence, to be exact and circumſpect in their converſe and living, that others, upon whom their influences fall, may be

drawn by them to a love of holineſs, and not ſeduced to luſts and intemperancies by their example. If he who was rightly ſurnamed *Copronimus*, have a fancy to the ſmell of horſe-dung, as to beſmear himſelf with it, all his Courtiers, in a ſervile compliance unto him, will qualifie themſelves for his company by uſing no other perfumes. Yea, if greater Beaſtialities be uſed by other Princes, they are not likely to want followers. The whole Court will be ſoon, like *Jacobs* Cattel, ſpotted and ſpeckled, as being apt to conceive, with ſome tincture of the Colours which they ſee in thoſe waters whereof they dayly drink. It being an hard thing to be an *Obadiah* that fears God greatly in *Ahabs* Court, or a Saint in *Neroes* Houſhold. But though evil in thoſe who are in *high places* be more *infectious*, and the good more powerful than it is in others; yet the vices of thoſe who are in a lower Station have a tendency to corrupt the greateſt, as the head in the body natural is oft diſtempered by the feet. And ſo the vertues that are in them are alſo operative to influence thoſe that are in dignity above them, to the making of themſelves evil, if not more good. The luſtre of St. *Johns* Sanctity, though cloathed with Camels hair, extorts reverence from *Herod* in his Robes; and *Pauls* excellent demeanour of himſelf at the Bar, well-nigh overcomes *Agrippa* upon the Bench to be a Chriſtian. O how careful then ſhould every man be, who in what condition ſoever he ſtands is a part of the body of humane ſociety, *to abhor evil, and to cleave to that which is good?* When the effects both of the one and other are not terminated in our ſelves, but do more or leſs benefit or hurt others as well as our ſelves,

Meditation

Meditation XXIII.

Vpon a Multiplying Glaſs.

WHat a vain and fictitious happineſs would that be, if a poor man, who had only a ſmall piece of money, ſhould, by the looking upon it through a multiplying Glaſs, pleaſe himſelf in believing that he is now ſecure from the fears of preſſing wants, his ſingle piece being ſuddenly minted into many pounds, with which he can readily furniſh himſelf with fuell to warm him, cloaths to cover him, and food to ſatisfie him? But alas! when he puts forth his hand to take a ſupply from what he beholds, he can feel nothing of what he ſees; and when the Glaſs is gone that preſented him with ſo much Treaſure, he can then ſee nothing but his firſt pittance, which alſo becomes the leſs deſirable becauſe of the diſappointment of his hopes. Upon what better foundation doth the felicity of the greateſt part of men ſtand, which is not fixed upon any true and ſpiritual good, as its proper *Baſis*, but upon the ſpecious ſemblances of a corrupt and mutable fancy? What is it that rich men do not promiſe themſelves, who conceive riches to be a ſtrong Tower? They think they can laugh at Famine, and when others, like the poor *Egyptians*, whoſe Subſtance is exhauſted, ſell themſelves and their children for food, they can buy their bread at any rate. If Enemies riſe up againſt them, they queſtion not, but they can purchaſe a peace or a victory. If Sickneſs come, oh how can they pleaſe themſelves in thinking that their Purſe can command

mand the Physicians skill, and the Drugsters shops. Elixars, Cordials, Magisterial powders, they conceive beforehand will be prescribed both as their dyet and Physick: And every avenue of the body, at which the disease or death may threaten to enter, shall be so fortified, as that both of them shall receive an easie and quick repulse. Now what are all these representations but the impostures of the glass of fancy, which, like the colours in the Rainbow, have more of *shew* than of Entity. Doth not *Solomon* counsel men not to labour to be rich? And expostulate with them, *Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not?* Doth not our *Saviour* call them, deceitful Riches? And *Paul*, uncertain Riches? What then can they contribute to the real happiness of any man? Surely the transient sparks that with much difficulty are forced from the flint, may as soon add light to the body of the Sun, as Riches can yield any solid comfort to the soul, or keep it from lying down in the bed of darkness and sorrow. Away then from me ye flattering vanities and gilded nothings of the world, get you to the Bats, and to the Moles, and try what beauteous rayes you can dart into their eyes. I will hence no more behold you in the Glass of Fancy, but in the Glass of the Word, which discovers that ye are alwaies vanity and vexation, no objects of trust in the times of strait, or price of deliverance in the day of wrath. It is methinks observable that four times in Scripture this saying is repeated, *That Riches and Treasures profit nothing in the day of wrath*, twice in the Book of *Proverbs*, and then again by two Prophets, *Ezekiel*, and *Zephaniah*. Doubtless these holy men knew what an universal proness there is in the minds of most to exalt Riches above Righteousness, and to think, that by them Heaven might be purchased,

purchased, and the flames of Hell bribed. How else could such words ever drop from the mouths of any, that they had made a Covenant with Death, and were at an agreement with Hell to pass from them? But, Lord, keep me from imagining to save my soul by Merchandize, or of entituling my self any other way to the Inheritance of Heaven, than by the Bloud of Christ, who is my Life, my Riches, my Rejoycing, and sure Confidence.

Meditation XXIV.

Upon Gravity and Levity.

THe *Stoick* Philosophy was famous for *Paradoxes*, strange Opinions, improbable, and besides common conceit, for which it was much admired by some, and as greatly controuled, and taxed by others. Howbeit, not *Stoicisme only*, but every Art, and course of life and learning hath some *Paradoxes* or other, but Christianity hath many more, which seem like nothing less than truth, and yet are as true as strange. What can be more contrary to the Principles and *Maxims* of Philosophers, than to hold that there is a regress from a total privation to an habit? It was that which the *Epicureans* and *Stoicks* derided in *Paul*, when he preached the Resurrection from the dead; and yet Christians build all their happiness and confidence upon it. What can seem to carry more of a contradiction in it than that saying of our Saviour, *He that will lose his life shall find it?* And yet it is a truth of that importance, that whosoever follows not Christs counsell will

will certainly miss of life. What will happily appear more novel and strange, than that which I shall now adde by inverting the common Axiom, and affirming this as a truth, *Levia tendunt deorsum, & gravia sursum*, Light things fall downwards, and heavy ascend upwards: The lighter they are the lower they sink, and the heavier they are the higher they rise; and yet this Riddle hath a truth in it. In Scripture the wicked that must fall as low as hell are resembled to things of the greatest *Levity* as well as vileness, *Dust*, *Chaff*, *Smoke*, *Fume*, *Scum*: and the Saints that must ascend as high as Heaven, are likened to things of weight as well as worth: To *Wheat*, the heaviest of which is the best; to *Gold*, which is of Metals the weightiest, as well as the richest; to *Gems* and precious Stones, that are valued by the number of the *Carrats* which they weigh, as well as by their lustre with which they sparkle. Yea, God hath his *Ballance* to weigh men and their actions, as well as his Touchstone to try them. He is a God of knowledge, by whom actions are weighed, saith *Hannah* in her Song: And if he find great men a lye and vanity upon the Ballance he will not spare them. What a severe Judgment did God execute upon *Belshazzar*, who being weighed and found wanting, was in the same night cast out both from his Kingdom, and from the Land of the living? And what a dreadful Sentence hath Christ foretold shall come from his mouth in the great day against those who have made a vain and empty profession of his Name, who are bid to depart from him, and go accursed into everlasting fire, not for doing evil against his, but for not doing of good unto them? A form of Godliness without the power will condemn, as well as real and open wickedness: To be found too light in Gods Scale may be a

bar

bar to heaven, as well as the load of many sins. O remember who hath said it, Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of *Scribes and Pharisees*, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of heaven. How gladly then would I perswade Christians, that the best way to climbe the *Jacobs Ladder*, which hath its foot on Earth, and its top in glory, is to be fully laden with all fruits of holiness. *Christi sarcina pennas habet non pondus*, the burden of Christ is not a pressing weight, but a winged thing which carries the Soul upwards, and helps it to soar aloft towards God himself. None are crowned with greater glory, or set upon higher Thrones, than they who have their fruit unto true holiness above others.

Meditation XXV.

Upon false Mediums.

THe fruition of the end, is the Sabbath of all action, having this property in it, to *quiet* as well as *incite* the *Agent*; for nothing moves that it may move, but moves that it may rest. And yet though the end be alwaies desirable, it is by Agents who act freely, and out of choice often missed, and falls short of, as well as enjoyed. And this sometimes comes to pass by their dividing the means from the end, presuming they may obtain the one, and yet not use the other. With this Sophism Satan hath cheated many of Salvation, while he hath made them confident of happiness, and yet careless of holiness; and to think they may Inne with the righteous, though they never travel with them

them in the way, that they may reap glory, though they sow seed to the flesh. Sometimes again they miss the end though they use the means, because they do not proportion the one to the other. They use the means, but it is, as some Patients take Physick, to stir the humours rather than to carry them away, and thereby endanger themselves, rather than effect a cure. Many through the strength of Conviction yield that if they will have heaven something must be done by them; but their study is rather to find out the *invisible point*, where nature and grace part, than to abound in all manner of holy Conversation, and so while they strive to do no more then what will save them, they miserably fall short of what is requisite. Others again miscarry in regard of the end, by pitching upon false and vain means, such when laboured and persisted in do not profit in the least. Would any man wonder at his disappointment, that should hunt an Hare with a Snail? Or to hit the Mark should shoot an Arrow out of a Butchers Gambrel? Or to make a Tree fruitful should cloath the body of it with costly Silks instead of feeding the root with good mould? Would not this folly be rather greatly reproached by all, then his frustrated endeavours in the least be pitied by any? And yet how many men who would brand such a person with the deepest mark of folly and madness are guilty of as great infatuation in matters of far higher moment? Is there any thing that can be of more real consequence, than the eternal welfare of an immortal soul? Can the care of Anxiety be too great what Rocks to shun; what paths to tread; what means to use, that may bring the soul and salvation together? And yet behold what an ill choice of *Mediums* do such who profess themselves wise make to effect it: The *Idolater*, he

after

after a strange manner first makes his God, and then begs his happiness from it; one part of the Wood he burnes, as Fuel to serve him, and the other part of it he serves and dreads as a Deity, and falling down unto it, worshippeth it, and saith, deliver me for thou art my God. The wretched *Libertine* he thinks it little skills what Religion any man is of, so he be but true unto it, and walk according to the Rules and Principles of it: as if Heaven were a Port to which all Windes would drive; an Inn in which Travellers that journey from contrary quarters may be equally received. The *Pharisaical Christian* layes the stress of his Salvation upon his Duties, which at best are like chaines of glass, more specious then strong; like flourishings in Parchment, that cannot bear a fiery trial. O how few are they who consider that Heaven stands like a little Mark in a wide Field, where there are a thousand wayes to erre from it, and but one to hit it? yea, though God hath said that there is but *one Sacrifice* by which we can be perfected; but *one Blood* by which we can be Purified; but *one Name* by which we can be saved; yet how hardly are the best drawn to trust perfectly to the Grace revealed, and to look from themselves to Christ, as the Author and Finisher of their blessedness? To make then a right choice of the way that leads to Salvation, is not an act of Natural Wisdom, but of Divine Illumination, and Teachings of the Spirit, who both inlightneth the Minde, and inclineth the will to chuse the one thing which is necessary. O therefore, holy Father, seeing thou hast made the whole Progress of Salvation, from first to last to be in Christ, and by Christ; *Election* to be in him, *Adoption* to be in him, *Justification* to be in him, *Sanctification* to be in him, *Glorification* to be in him; grant, that whatever others do,

do, I may never chuſe the *Candlelight of Reaſon*, but the *Sun of Righteouſneſs*, as the guide of my feet into the pathes of life, and both in life and death ſay, as that bleſſed Martyr did, none but Chriſt, none but Chriſt.

Meditation XXVI.

Upon the Royal Oak.

THe Perfections of God, his Soveraignty, Power, Wiſdom and goodneſs are ſeen as in a bright mirror, not onely in the *ſtanding* workes of *Creation*, but in the *tranſient* workes of *Providence*, who doth, as *Job* acknowledgeth *great things paſt finding out, and wonders without number.* But among the many ſignal Birthes of Providence this which my thoughts are now upon may juſtly challenge the right of the Firſt-born in a double portion, both of Meditation and Admiration: As then *Zacheus* to ſee *Jeſus* climbed up into a *Sycamore-Tree*, and thereby gained not onely a ſight of Chriſt, but a gracious look, and comfortable words from him: let us alſo climbe this *Royal Oake*, that we may have an awfull ſight of God, ſuch, as may not onely fill us with wonder, but further us in *holineſs*, which is the great end of Gods *Providences* as well as of his *Ordinances.* And the firſt ſtep or motion that I ſhall make to aſcend this Oak by, is the conſideration of Gods Power, in uſing the ſame Creatures, not onely in differing, but in *contrary* Services, as he is pleaſed ſeverally to apply them. The Fire at the ſame time preſerves the three Children in the Furnace, and devours the

the Instruments of their Persecution: The Red-Sea is *Israels* Path to *Canaan*, and the Waters a Wall on each hand, but both are made the *Ægyptians* grave: The Earth opens her Mouth to swallow up *Corah* and his Company, but it helpes the *Woman* in her flight by opening its mouth to drink in the Flood, which the Dragon sent forth from his Mouth to destroy Her. The Trees of the Field fight for *David*, and contribute to his Victory more than his Army; for it is said that the Wood destroyed more than the Sword: An Oak Arrests *Absolom* in his flight, who is caught and hanged in it, as if it would point out what was the just reward of his Treason and Rebellion against his King and Father; But an Oak succours our *Prince* in his retreat from the strength and power of a prevailing Enemy; and though it can tender no *Wreaths* or *Crownes* to him, yet it spreads forth its *Armes* to receive him, and keeps him in so much safety as to deliver good Men of their Feares who were afflicted for his Jeopardy, and to disappoint others of their hopes who were Vainly Confident that he would be found either among the number of the Slain, or of the Prisoners; But God was seen in the Mount, making his Escape to be far more wonderful in every Mans eyes than their Victory. Who then would not Adore and Fear such a God, at whose Beck, *Fire, Water, Trees of the Field*, yea and all Creatures become Enemies, or Friends, as he pleaseth to make them.

A second step is the consideration of Gods absolute Soveraignty over all Potentates, and Kings of the Earth; who, as *Elihu* expresseth it, *Breaketh in pieces the Mighty without number, and sets others in their stead.* How full are the Sacred Chronicles of strange

Viciſſitudes and Changes which God hath made in the Crownes and Scepters of Princes? *Sauls* Kingdom is taken from him and given to *David*: *Rehoboams* is rent in twain, and of twelve parts two onely poſſeſſed by him: *Athalia* ſhe uſurpes the Throne, and deſtroyes the Seed Royal: *Joaſh* is ſlain by a Conſpiracy: *Manaſſeh* is bound in Fetters: *Zedekiah* hath Judgment given againſt him to take his farewell of the light, in beholding the ſlaying of his Sons, and then to have both his eyes put out. How eaſie were it to fill a Volume in this kind? but what need we ſearch further into Hiſtory, have we not ſeen as ſad Spectacles as we can any where read? hath not Royal Blood been ſhed upon a Scaffold, to the ſhame and reproach of Religion? have we not ſeen Perſons of mean extractions, leaving their *Cottages*, and dwelling in Kings *Pallaces*, when Soveraignty hath been forced to take up the *lodging of a Crow*? have we not ſeen that diſquieting Prodigie, of Servants upon Horſes, and Princes walking like Servants on foot? Now, to what end doth God thus ſhake the Mountaines, and make the greateſt in Power to be as the Chaff of the Summer floores? is it not to ſtain the Pride of the Arm of Fleſh, and to let every one know that Power belongeth unto the Lord, and that it is better to truſt in the Lord, then to put confidence in Princes?

A third ſtep, or motion, diſcovers to us how eaſily God can hide Perſons and things from Man, when Man can neither hide Counſells from God, nor yet himſelf. *Adam* runs from God, and ſeeks ſhelter among the Trees of the Garden; but God findes him out: he ſowes Fig-leaves together to cover his Nakedneſs, but God eſpies it. The Wings of the Morning can carry no Man to ſuch a diſtance as that God ſhall not behold

behold him; nor the pitchy darkneſs of the Night make ſuch a Covering, as he cannot look through, to whom the darkneſs and the light are both alike. The onely way for a ſinner to hide himſelf from God, is to hide himſelf in God. But with what facility and variety of wayes can God ſecure and keep thoſe whom Men deſign to deſtruction? *David* and ſix hundered Men are in the ſides of the ſame Cave into which *Saul* enters, and he perceives it not. *Joaſh* is hid ſix years in the Temple miraculouſly from the bloody Sword of *Athaliah*: and our *Sovereign* is no leſs wonderfully for ſome dayes preſerved in an Oak, as in a Sanctuary, though his Enemies make a moſt ſtrict ſearch for him, there being no Nation, or Kingdom, under their Power, whether they did not ſend to ſeek him; and though they took not an Oath of them that they found him not, yet they proclaimed ample Rewards to any that would diſcover him. We read in *Judges* of an Angel that ſate under an *Oak*, and may we not well preſume, that this *Oak*, which had a Prince in the top of it, had alſo an *Angel* at the bottom of it, if we well weigh the Eminency of the deliverance.

A fourth ſtep gives us to behold the rich Mercy, and the great Faithfulneſs of God, who though he doth afflict, yet doth not forſake; who as he caſts down, ſo he raiſeth up: as he taketh away, ſo alſo he graciouſly reſtored. Was ever Prince reduced to ſorer ſtraits? Did he not at once conflict with dangers of Life, Poverty, Baniſhment, diſappointment of Counſells, and a daily ſetting back of his hopes by new difficulties and emergences that did ariſe? and yet how wonderfully did God make theſe Mountaines to become a Plain; the confuſed noiſe of Warriours in Battel, was not heard, Garments rolled in Blood were not ſeen; nei-

ther were the Firr-trees terribly ſhaken in the Field; all was effected not by might nor power, but by the Spirit of God. The Temple, in which there was neither Hammer nor Axe, nor any Tool of Iron heard, was not built in a more calme and ſtill manner than his Throne was Erected. And he who was as a Stone rejected for a long time, by certain Builders, at length became the Head-Stone of the Corner. May we not then well ſay this is the Lords doing, it is marvellous in our eyes? Let me therefore make here a pauſe, and in ſtead of a further progreſs, ſay as *Moſes* did, I will ſtand and ſee this great ſight, a Prince once diſguiſed in a poor and mean habit, and now clothed with Robes of Majeſty; once an Exile from three Kingdomes, and now poſſeſſing the juſt Royalties of them all. Once neceſſitated to climbe an *Oak* to preſerve his own life, and now daily aſcending the *Throne* to give out the Lawes of life and of death unto others. O what a web of wonders are here, of which God hath made garments of Praiſe and Salvation for him, whom many judged to be not onely ſmitten but forſaken of God? Admiration methinks now is better then words; and ſilence, in an awfull beholding of theſe things, is more expreſſive then a free ſpeaking of them. I ſhall therefore break off this Meditation, which I cannot happily end, adding onely this ſhort Prayer, That the good will of him that dwelt in the *Oak*, as well as in the *buſh*, may ſtill be ſeen in the bleſſings that come from him, upon the Head of our *Joſeph*, and on the Crown of the Head of Him that was ſeparated from His Subjects, but is now wonderfully reſtored to them.

Meditation

Meditation XXVII.

Upon the Weapon Salve.

WHo was the Author of this Weapon Salve, cannot certainly be affirmed: Some attribute it to *Paracelſus*, who was very pregnant in myſterious Inventions: others to one *Parmenſis Anſhelmus* an *Italian*, who was called a *Saint*, as *Simon Magus* of old, the great power of God, though both were no better then grand Sorcerers. But whoever he were, the Ointment is much famed (yet not altogether unqueſtioned) for its ſtrange manner of healing and curing of wounds, differing from other Phyſicall Applications in a double reſpect: The one is, that it is applyed not to the perſon who receives the wounds, but to the active Inſtrument that inflicts it, which is a ſubject not at all capable of ſickneſs, or ſanity, of eaſe or pain, and ſo cannot be receptive of the alterative power of the Oyntment, which, if it work by a vertual contact, muſt neceſſarily have the intermedial Bodies to participate of it. The other is, that this Salve effects its Cure at diſtances, which are inconſiſtent with the Rules of a mediate Contact, it heales the Patient when he is a hundred miles off, as well as when he is near; and that requires a vicinity of place, as well as a right diſpoſition of the *Medium*. Now theſe differences, though they have ſerved to heighten its eſteem in the apprehenſions of many, and have given occaſion to

Learned Men, who are great admirers of *Sympathies*, to Write for it, or to be fautors of it; yet others of no leſs worth and repute have divided from them, and have ſlighted it as an empty vanity, or cenſured it as a Magical impiety. For my part I am not ſatisfied with ſuch ſubtill nicities as are uſed to defend it, of common and univerſal Spirits, which convey the action of the remedy unto the part, and conjoyn the vertue of bodies far disjoyned, neither can I think it worthy of ſuch ſpeculations; it commonly healing but ſimple wounds, and ſuch, which being kept clean, need no other hand then that of Nature, and the Balſam of the proper part. But there is a Weapon Salve of which it is eaſie to ſpeak much, but impoſſible to ſay enough; ſo full it is of divine and myſterious wonders, if we conſider either what it is, or what the cures are which it effects, or what the diſtance is in which it operates. Would you know what this *Salve* is? it is the Blood of Chriſt Crucified, whoſe ſufferings do all turn to the advantage of Believers: the *Blood* is his, but the *Balme* is theirs; the *Thornes* are his, but the *Crown* is theirs; the *Price* is his, but the *Purchaſe* is theirs: Would you hear what Cures it doth? it healeth inveterate Ulcers, and mortal Wounds; it extinguiſheth the Fiery Darts of Satan; it drawes forth the Venom of the Sting of Death; it eaſeth Preſſures; it deſtroyeth Yokes, and what not, that riſeth up as a let or barr to a Believers life or happineſs. Would you know the extent of its vertue, and at what a diſtance it operates? *Paul* tells us, that by the Blood of his Croſs Chriſt hath reconciled all things unto himſelf, whether they be things in Earth, or things in Heaven. There is no Perſon that can ſtand ſo remote,

or

or be at any ſuch Angle, or Corner of the Earth, but he may partake of the influence of it, if he do but caſt up an eye of Faith towards Heaven, and be as fully healed as any other. Like as the ſtung *Iſraelite* who lay in the utmoſt part of the Camp did receive equal benefit by looking to the Brazen Serpent, with him that ſtood next unto the Pole upon which it was Erected. O therefore let not any, who are exerciſed with Spiritual Conflicts caſt away their Confidence, but fight the good fight of Faith unto the end: for though they be not *invulnerable*, yet none of their Wounds are *incurable*. The Blood of Chriſt is more powerful to Save, than Sin, or other Enemies to Deſtroy; elſe the great end of Chriſts Coming into the World, of being a Phyſician to the Sick, a Deliverer to the Captive, an Healer of the Broken-Hearted would be in vain, and all the Saints muſt be ſtill in their Sins. Set then Faith on work ye that Faint and Droop in your Mindes; and ſay not, who ſhall go up for us to Heaven, and bring this Salve unto us that we may liye? or who ſhall go over the Sea for us and bring this Soveraigne Balme of *Gilead* unto us, that we may be healed by it? Do but Believe and the Cure is wrought. Faith is the Inſtrument which makes a vertual Contact between Chriſt and every Believer: It receives healing Grace from him, and ſtraitwayes conveys it unto the Subject in which it is to terminate. For as Futurition in reſpect of the Exiſtency of things is no prejudice to the Eye of Faith in the beholding of them as preſent; So neither is diſtance of place any hinderance to the efficacy of the touch of Faith, but that it may forthwith tranſmit the Sanative Efflux of Chriſts Blood unto him,

who by Faith toucheth him: The Woman that laboured many yeares of the Bloody Issue, in the same instant that She touched the Hem of Christs Garment, felt in her self, that She was healed of her Plague. But I am jealous, that whilest I commend this sacred remedy, some presumptuous Sinner, who is more apt to abuse Grace, than a Wounded Spirit to improve it, should make no other use of it than to think he may sin securely, and needs not fear what bruises and wounds he contracts, seeing the Cure is certain and speedy. I can therefore do no less then express my self in an holy Indignation against such, who would make the precious Blood of my Saviour subservient to their lusts, desiring rather to be freed from the *danger* than from the *Dominion* of their sins. *O my Soul come not thou into their secret; unto their Assembly mine Honour be not thou united: Cursed be their lusts, for they are vile, and their desires for they are devillish.* Let me bless God who hath made me whole, *and sin no more, least a worse thing come unto me.*

Meditation XXVIII.

Upon the Rudder of a Ship.

AMongst other Similitudes, which St. *James* useth to shew that great matters are effected by small means; this of the *Rudder* of a *Ship* is one, and he usheretb it in with a *signal* word, which the Scripture often prefixeth to weighty sayings, to render them the more remarkable: *Behold also the Ships, which though they*

they be so great, are driven of fierce winds, yet are turned about with a very small Helm whithersoever the Governour listeth. The right guidance of this single part is of such consequence to the safety of the whole, as that every irregular motion may either hazard the Vessel, or greatly hinder its progress, when it answereth not the just point of the Compass. How continually are these words of direction, *Starboard, Starboard, Port, Port,* spoken by him that eyes the *Compass*, repeated by him that holds the *Helm*, to prevent all danger that might arise from mistakes. Or else how suddenly would Rocks, Waves, or Sands make a prey of them? Well then might *Aristotle* in his *Mechanical Questions* propose it as a Problem worthy of a resolution, why a little helm hanging upon the outmost part of the Ship, should have such a great power as to move a vast bulk and weight with much facility, amidst storms and gusts of wind? And may we not answer, that the wisdom in these Arts is Gods, though the industry in the use of them is mans. But the more power it hath, the more apt Emblem it is of that faculty of the Will, which in all moral actions is the *Spiritual Rudder* of the soul, to turn the whole man this way or that way as it pleaseth. The Position of the School is a truth, *Inclinatio voluntatis est inclinatio totius compositi:* The inclination of the will is the inclination of the whole person, and according to the rectitude, or pravity of its motions both the man and his actions are denominated good or evil. And hence it is that *Austin* doth often define Sin by a *mala voluntas*, and good by a *bona voluntas*, because of the dominion which the Will hath in the whole man. Of how absolute concernment is it then, that this great Engine which commandeth all the inferiour powers of the soul, be not disordered.

diſordered. If there be a *Dyſpepſie* in the Stomack, an *inflamation* in the Liver, or a taint in ſome other Vitall, what can the leſs noble parts of the body contribute unto its health? If the Foundation be out of courſe, how can the Building ſtand? If the Spring be polluted, who can expect the Streams ſhould be Chriſtalline? If the will be vitiated, how can it be, that Fear, Hatred, Love, Joy, Deſire, which in the *ſenſitive* part are *Paſſions*, but in the *ſoul* are immaterial *affections*, or rather *operations* of the Will, and are found in Angels themſelves, ſhould be pure and free from the corruption of their principle? It is therefore neceſſary that this *ſpiritual Rudder* have alſo a *ſpiritual Compaſs* by which it may ſteer, that ſo its motions may not be deſtructive, or at the leaſt vain. And what can this Compaſs be but the Word and Will of God? Conformity and obedience unto which is the only happineſs as well as the whole duty of man. It is mans duty to will what God wills, becauſe as he was made like unto God in his Image, ſo he was made for God in his end. And it is the happineſs of man to *will* and *nill* as God doth, becauſe he thereby only comes to obtain a true and perfect reſt: Elſe *Seu caret optatis, ſeu fruitio miſer eſt*; whether he have or want what he deſires, he is ſtill miſerable; like *Noahs* Dove, reſtleſs and fluttering till it can find out an object wherein it may acquieſce; Like the Grave and the Horſe-leech, alwaies craving and never ſatisfied. See then, O Chriſtian, from whence is it that this world, which is a tempeſtuous Sea unto all, proves ſo fatall to many in the ſad ſhipwrack of their eternal happineſs. Is it not from the lawleſs motions of their will? which when not governed by the will of God, as its perfect rule, is *Cupiditas non voluntas*, an impetuous and raging *luſt* rather than a

will.

will. What was it that ruined our firſt Parents, and in them all their Poſterity, but the inordinacy of their will; by which they loſt both their happineſs and holineſs at once? And what is it under the Goſpel into which Chriſt reſolves the damnation of thoſe that periſh? Is it not that they will not come unto him that they might have life? All obedience or diſobedience is properly, or at leaſt primarily in no part but in the will, ſo that though other faculties of the ſoul in regeneration are ſanctified, and thereby made conformable to the will of God, yet obedience and diſobedience are formally acts of the will, and according to its qualifications is a man ſaid to be obedient unto God or diſobedient. O that I could therefore awaken both my ſelf and others to a due conſideration of what importance it is, like a wiſe and induſtrious Pilot to guide this *Rudder* of the ſoul, the will of man, by the unerring Compaſs of the will of God. Heaven is the Port for which we all profeſs our ſelves bound, and can it ever be obtained by naked and ineffi cacious velleities, by a few faint wiſhings and wouldings? What blind *Balaam* would then miſs of it? What ſloathful man, that hideth his hand in his boſome, and will not ſo much as bring it to his mouth again, might not then poſſeſs it, as well as any *Caleb*, or *Joſhuah*, that wholly followed the Lord, or as *David* who fulfilled all his wills? Methinks that ſaying of our Saviour ſhould be as a Goad in the ſide of every ſluggard, *Not every one that ſaith unto me Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doth the will of my father which is in heaven.* However, O holy God, let it quicken me to all diligence in an entire conformity of my will to thy will, that ſo I may readily do what thou commandeſt, and let me eſteem it as the beſt part of heavens happi-

neſs,

neſs, that I ſhall one day do it perfectly, as the Angels which behold thy face.

Meditation XXIX.

Vpon the Balſam Tree.

SOme faces are by the Painter drawn with leſs difficulty than others, the lineaments and features of them being ſuch, as are more eaſie for his eye to obſerve, and for his hand alſo happily to expreſs. And ſo it is with ſome Subjects of meditation above others, which with leſs labour of the mind are by the Pencill of the thoughts formed into lively reſemblances of heavenly things, and thereby bearing a proportion to our Senſes, do convey ſpiritual myſteries in a facile and delightful manner to our underſtanding. Such a ſubject is this *Balſam Tree*, which while I think of the *place* of its growth, the way of obtaining its *Juyce*, and the *ſoveraign vertue* that it hath to effect ſtrange cures, and to heal Inveterate diſeaſes, it carries forthwith my thoughts to my bleſſed Saviour, who is the only repoſitory in which God hath laid up all his invaluable treaſures of healing Balſams. It readily ſuggeſts to me ſuch moving Conſiderations as ſerve to exalt Chriſts Excellency in my heart, and to endeare him to me in all the ties of choyceſt affections; And that it may do ſo to others, I will draw the parallel between this Tree and Chriſt, that others may ſee what a ſweet repreſentation it is of him, who, as *David* ſaith, forgiveth all our iniquities, who healeth all our diſeaſes. Firſt, the ſole place of this trees growth is in *Emanuels Land*.

It

It is *Plinies* obſervation, *Balſamum uni terrarum Judea conceſſum eſt*; it is a ſpecial grant beſtowed by God upon *Judea*: the Country which is renouned for Chriſts *Birth* is alſo only celebrated for this Balm, all other Nations wholly wanted it, or at leaſt had none like it. *Moſes* tells us, that it was anciently one of the Iſhmaelites Commodities which they carried from *Gilead* to *Egypt*. And *Ezekiel* ſaith it was *Iſraels* and *Judahs* Merchandiſe to *Tyrus*. Doth it not then genuinely poynt out unto us, that the whole world muſt be beholding to Chriſt for Salvation and healing? Doth it not as a ſpiritual *Hierogliphick*, aſſert that weighty Doctrine of *Peters*, *That there is no name under heaven given among ſt men, whereby we muſt be ſaved, but by the name of Chriſt?* Why then do men lay out their money for that which is not *Balm*, Why do they take hold ſometimes on one Creature, and ſometimes one another, ſaying, *Be thou our healer, let this ruin be under thy hand?* Is it not one of thoſe glorious Appellations which God in Scripture is pleaſed to take unto himſelf, *Ego Jehovah curator tuus*; I am the Lord that healeth thee? Take heed then, O Chriſtian, when thou art under any diſtreſs, or under any malady to cheat thy ſelf with falſe remedies, to uſe *Fig leaves* inſtead of *Figs themſelves*. *Adam* took the one, which did only hide his nakedneſs, but not cure it; but to reſtore *Hezekiah*, God took the other. Uſe what God hath appointed, not what thou fancieſt.

Secondly, This *Balſame tree* drops and weeps forth its Balm to heal their wounds, that cut and mangle it, and did not our bleſſed Saviour do thus? What a ſtrange requital did this *great innocent* and *holy* perſon make unto thoſe from whom he ſuffered? They mock and revile him hanging upon the Croſs, and he prayes,

and

and begs forgiveneſs for them. They ſhed his bloud, and he makes it a precious Medicine to heal their putred ſores. They ſmite and pierce him to the heart with a Spear, and he erects in his heart a fountain to waſh them from their ſin and uncleanneſs. Was it ever heard, that a Phyſician would ſweat and bleed for his ſurfeited Patient? Or that an offended Prince would expiate the foul Treaſons of his Subjects with his own life? Surely well might the Apoſtle ſay, that *God commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet ſinners, Chriſt died for us.* Be aſtoniſhed, O ye Angels of Heaven, who delight to pry into Goſpel myſteries at this Abyſs of divine love, from which *Seraphims* themſelves cannot but detract if they ſhould in the leaſt conceive, that they could either fathom with their knowledge, or expreſs in their praiſes. And be ye melted, O rocky hearts of ſinners, with the ardency and ſtrength of ſuch love, which is ſtronger than death it ſelf. It was his love which held him upon the Croſs to finiſh your ſalvation when death could not hold him in the grave. Let this love of Chriſt conſtrain you henceforth not to live unto your ſelves, but unto him that died for you.

Thirdly, This *Balm* which diſtills from this wounded tree is of ſuch vertue and efficacy, as that it is *Medicina omni morbia*; Phyſick to cure all diſeaſes, being applied inwardly or outwardly. It allayeth the *Headach*, it reſtoreth thy eye-ſight, helpeth the *Aſtmah*, purgeth *Ulcers*, cureth the poyſonful *Sting* of Serpents, healeth all kind of wounds. Is not then this *Balm* in the *Letter* an apt Emblem of the Balm in the *myſtery* of the bloud of Chriſt? Which is of an unlimited power and excellency. What is the evil that can befall any, for which this is not a certain Cure? Oh when taken inwardly,

wardly, as in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, it is both *Food* and *Phyſick*, it enlightens the dark mind, it heals the broken in heart, it fills the hungry with good things. When ſprinkled outwardly, as in Baptiſme, it is effectual to ſtop the Leproſie of Sin, to cure the venome and rage of Luſts, to mollifie the ſtony heart, and to make fruitful the Barren? Be then of good chear, O ye drooping and afflicted ſouls, let me ſay to you, as *Paul* to thoſe in the tempeſt, *The lives of none of you ſhall be loſt.* If you complain, No ſins like yours; let me adde, There is no Salvation like Chriſts. If you ſay, you are a *Syſteme*, a fardle of ſins and luſts, hear what the Apoſtle ſaith, *The blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin.* No man ever miſcarried for being a *great* ſinner, but only for being an *impenitent* ſinner. Be not in love with your ſins, as Beggars are with their ſores, that will not part with them, and then doubt not of your Phyſicians *skill*, or *care*. It is his peculiar glory, that never any Patient miſcarried under his hand, though ſuch was their condition, that they were all utterly incurable by any other.

Meditation XXX.

Upon the palpitation of the heart.

THe *Pearl* which in the Oyſter is a *diſeaſe*, in the Cabinet is a *Jewel* of rich value, and in the Ear an *Ornament* of an orient beauty: and ſuch a thing is this trembling or palpitation of the heart; in the body it is a ſad *malady*, in the ſoul it is an heavenly grace!

They

They who are afflicted with the one, seek earnestly to the Physician for a Cure: And they who want the other, importune God to obtain it from him as a blessing when once they know the excellency and worth of it. Who is the Favourite of heaven, with whom the high and lofty one, that inhabiteth Eternity, will dwell? And to whom he will look with an eye of protection, with an eye of care and delight? Is it not to him that is of a contrite heart, and that trembleth at his word? Who is the best Saint on Earth? Is it not he who useth most diligence to work out his salvation with fear and trembling? All duties are best done when accompanied with this holy trembling. Prayer and Confession of sins are never better made, than when we imitate those Penitents in *Ezra*, who sate trembling in the street of the House of God. The Word is never more awfully received as the Will and Command of a Great King, than when received as the Elders of *Bethlehem* did *Samuel*, who trembled at his coming. O methinks I cannot without wonder read how *Paul* lived among the *Corinthians*, in fear and much trembling, as sensible of the weight of his Ministry, and how they again received *Titus*, *Pauls* Messenger, with the like affection, not entertaining him with costly banquets, with Court-like Salutations, but with fear and trembling, which is the highest respect that can be showen to the Doctrine of Christ. Yea, the Supper of the Lord it self, though it be a Feast of Love, in which Christ *qui est totus amor est caput cœnæ*, who is all love, is the chief and onely dish, that a Soul hath to feed upon, is best Celebrated with a Divine trembling, which may correct our joy, and keep it from degenerating into a carnal mirth. The sparkling raies of light which are reflected from the polished Diamond, are much beautified

tified by those tremulous motions which the eye beholds in the Stone: And so spiritual joy receives no little addition of lustre and sweetness by the mixtures of trembling that appear in it. How great then is the folly and wickedness of those Sons of *Belial*, who scoff at the awfull behaviour which any exercise in the Services of God? as *Michal* did at *Davids* dancing before the Ark, as if it were nothing but Pusillanimity, which would beseem Children better than Christians, who startle often at their own groundless Imaginations: But are the Angels Cowards, which tremble in the presence of God? Is it any thing unbecoming them who continually stand in his presence to express a fear of him, as well as love unto him? How then can it be indecent for worthless Creatures to serve the great *Jehovah* with a holy awe and fear of his Majesty? O God, I am conscious unto my self how little all my duties have been intervened with this divine grace. I have prayed before thee, but not trembled, I have received a Law from thy mouth, but I have not feared thee, the Great Law-giver, nor trembled at thy Commands. I have heard often of thee by the hearing of the Ear, yet I have not abhorred my self. And therefore I humbly beg of thee, that thou wouldest help me to sanctifie thy name in my heart, and to make thee my fear, and my dread; that so I may neither abuse thy mercy, nor yet provoke thy Justice.

Meditation XXXI.

Upon the Shadow of a Man.

HOw abſolute, as well as general is *Davids* aſſertion, *Surely every man walketh in a vain ſhew*, or *Image*, leading an imaginary rather than a real life: Fleeing away as a *ſhadow*, rather than abiding as a *ſubſtance*. How ſhall I therefore fix a Meditation upon the ſhadow of a ſhadow? Or hint ought that may be uſeful to any man, which grows only from ſo ſlender a principle as his own ſhadow? And yet if it be true which *Lorinus* ſaith, that the Art of Imagery was *ex umbris nata*, firſt learned from a due obſervation of thoſe reſemblances, and proportions, which the ſhadow bears unto the body; why may not ſome moral Conſiderations be ſuggeſted unto us from the different motions, oppoſite variations, ſudden vaniſhings, which every man may dayly behold in his own ſhadow? Are not theſe genuine thoughts for a man to conceive, that it is with him, and with every Chriſtian, as it is with thoſe who walk with their faces towards the Sun, the dark ſhadow is quite behind them, but when they turn from the Sun, it forthwith changeth its place and comes before them. When they travel with their faces to the Sun of Righteouſneſs, their paths are full of light and comfort; but when they turn from him, what dark Images of death? What gaſtly apparitions of hell and deſtruction do go before them every ſtep they tread? Yea, the farther they wander from God, how doth their terrour encreaſe, and their fears multiply, which

which are ſtretched out like the ſhadows of the Evening, untill at length they be ſwallowed up in the black darkneſs of the night? O that Apoſtates would think of this, who after they have ſet their faces towards Heaven, do again turn them towards Hell; who, after they have known the way of righteouſneſs, depart from the holy Commandment delivered unto them. Can your hearts endure thoſe diſmal ſpectrums, that you ſhall continually behold? Will you not, like the Hypocrites in *Zion*, at length cry out, *Who ſhall dwell with devouring fire, and everlaſting burnings?* O that the Children of light and of the day would conſider this, what great changes are made in their Eſtates and Comforts by their averſions from God? Have they not cauſe to ſay and wiſh as *Job* did? *O that I were as in the daies when God preſerved me; when his Candle ſhined upon my head.* When his favour was like the Sun in the *Zenith*, which caſts its Beams ſo directly, as that it makes no ſhadow at all. Surely, they will find, that the ſhades of ſin are far more diſmal than the darkeſt nights of affliction; and that unleſs the light of Gods favour, which like the Sun on the Dyal of *Ahaz*, hath gone down many degrees, do return back again as many, they cannot, like *Ezekiah*, have any comfortable aſſurance that they ſhall live and not dye. O Lord therefore hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footſteps be not moved, and let me alwaies be rather as thoſe whoſe faces are towards *Zion*, though I go weeping, than as thoſe who turn the back upon thee, and conſider not that their ſteps go down to the Chambers of death.

Meditation XXXII.

Vpon the Moulting of a Peacock.

SUch is the gayety of the *Peacocks* Plumes, that *Nazianzen* (as I find him cited) ſaith, that when he ſpreads his Starry Wheel the *Peahen* is provoked to luſt; And the *Naturaliſts*, who deſcribe his properties, affirm, that he is ambitious of Praiſe, and affects to ſhew his Beauty, when commended by ſpectators, in a ſtately tread, and free diſplaying of his various colours againſt the Sun, which may caſt a luſtre upon them. But alaſs! How ſhort is the continuance of his Glory? how ſmall is the diſtance between his delight to expoſe himſelf to the view of others, and his ſhame to be lookt upon by any? for no ſooner do thoſe ſpecious Feathers, in which he prided himſelf, fall from him, but he walkes ſorrowfully, and hath then (as is obſerved) *latronis paſſum*, the ſhifting pace of a Thief, who flies the light, and the eye which beholds him: He is then dejected with the ſenſe of his loſs, as one that is robbed by the Autumne of his Summers riches. Can we have now, though we ſhould make it our ſtudy, a more clear Comment upon that Text of St. Pauls, *The Faſhion, or Figure of this World paſſeth away?* or a more apt Emblem of Worldly Mens behaviour when ſo it doth, then this penſive Bird affords unto us? What is the World, with which Men are ſo paſſionatly inammoured, but a ſurface, an out-ſide, not ſo much a *Beauty*, as a *Luſt*, as St. *John* ſtiles it? and what are all thoſe tranſient Felicities of Honour, Fame, Riches, by which ſome are diſtinguiſhed from others;

but

but ſo many Crownes of breath that have nothing of any firmneſs, or ſolid conſiſtency. What are they but ſo many painted bubbles which ſhine and break? O methinks I never wanted words till now, to expreſs their emptineſs! how ſhall I ſay ſomething, that may ſpeak them leſs then nothing? and yet in what admiration are theſe things had with moſt? How do Men affect to have the eyes of others to behold them? and the mouthes of others to applaud them? How highly do they who want any of theſe ſpecious vanities thirſt after them? and how hardly can any bear the loſs and privation of what this way they enjoy. And yet this is onely certain, that all theſe things are moſt uncertain. The Sick Mans Pulſe is not more uneven in its beatings; The leaves of Trees more various in their falling; or the Feathers of Birds more facil in their moulting, than the Fancy and Pomp of all Earthly greatneſs is frail in its continuance. How many accidents do make a change where Men do promiſe themſelves the moſt firme ſtability? How ſoon is *Jobs* hedg pulled up, who ſaid he ſhould die in his neſt, and multiply his dayes as the ſand? And *Davids* Mountain removed, and he troubled, who pleaſed himſelf in its ſtrength? What ſtrange alterations doth the frownes of a Prince make in a Courtiers glory? *Hamans* plumes of honour and riches which were lifted up and ſpread to the wonder of beholders, upon the change of *Ahaſuerus* his Countenance flag and trail in the dirt like the Peacocks train in a ſtorm, yea drop and fall off; leaving him expoſed to the utmoſt of ſhame and ignominy. What ſtedfaſtneſs had the rich Man in his great Poſſeſſions beyond his own conceit? he promiſed himſelf the reſt of many years, and yet lived not to ſee another morning. Death made *ſubitum pennarum*

deplavium, an unexpected breach upon his designed projects; and while he thinks to Impe his wings for an higher flight and mount, he falls as low as the grave. Can we then make a better, or more seasonable meditation, when we find our affections carried out to the prizing and seeking of such perishing vanities, then to expostulate thus with our selves? Why is my fooliſh heart eaten up with cares? mine eyes robbed of sleep, mine hands wearied with unceſſant labour to graſp clowdes, Shadowes, trifles, that have little of reallity or worth, and leſs of duration: are theſe the things that make Angels happy? are the Robes and Crownes of Saints made of no other Matter then that we may ſee in the Courts of Princes? O what a poor place were Heaven, if it had no other riches, beauty, excellency, than what might be fetched out of the bowells of the Earth, or the bottom of the Seas and Rocks? Adde but Eternity to ſuch Common Comforts, and you turn them into burthens which cannot be borne; into a ſatiety that produceth loathing, and not delight. It is a change onely that makes them to be grateful, it being ſometimes as pleaſing to want them as to have them; to lay them aſide, as to put them on. Is it not then wiſdom for me, for every one to make a right judgment concerning true happineſs? and to know that it is one *thing*, and not many *things*; and yet it is ſufficient for all perſons, for all places both in Heaven and Earth; for all times both in this life and after it. It is ever the ſame, and maketh us ever the ſame, it hath no change in it ſelf, but the communication of its growth in us, and what is now Grace, ſhall be Glory in Heaven. If it could decay or looſe, it were not happineſs but miſery. Lord therefore what ever others judge or think, make me like the wiſe Merchant willing

ling to sell all to buy the Rich Pearl, yea to contemne all for the one thing necessary, and to say as *David* did, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon Earth, that I desire besides thee.*

Meditation XXXIII.

Upon a Pleasure-Boat.

A Private house is often built by the same Model which Princes use for their Pallaces, the dimensions onely being contracted, with the observance of the same Figure. And so a Boat, or Vessel of Pleasure, differing in its use and design, as well as in its bulk from another Ship, is yet by the skill and Ingeny of the Artist exactly made after the mould or shape of the tallest Ship of War and Traffick; it having its *Rigging*, *Sailes*, *Anchors*, *Cables*, *False Ports*, and what not that please the fancy and eye of the beholder? but how many of these things are more for pomp and beauty then for use and necessity? when the Vessel it self is made onely to receive the caresses and blandishments of the Sea, and not to endure the hardship of a storm. It is not an Ark for necessity, as *Moses* his was, nor an Ark for safety, as *Noahs* was, but a Vessel for Pleasure; and therefore a gentle breath that may swell the Sailes, and the curling of the Waters that may cause a little agitation; and a serene skie, which may invite the Fishes to sport, do much heighten the delight of the Passengers; but loud Windes, Waves that roar, Cloudes which mask the Heavens with darkness, carry in them so many Images of death, and soon turn their

Pleasure into affrightments, and put them upon nothing more than an earnest longing and wishing for the safety of the Shore. But the resolute Marriners in their Ships they both expect and prepare to wrastle with such difficulties, they ply their Sailes, they fathom the Sea with their Line, they have their hand to the Helm, and their eye to Heaven, they let fall their Anchors, and ride amidst the Tempest till it hath spent its fury, with an undaunted Courage. I have now methinks set forth in an *Allegory*, the *Temporary Professor*, and the *sound* and *reall Believer*; the one having onely the *forme*, and the other the *power* of godlinesse; the one serving himself, and the other his God, in the Work of Religion. In the Sunshine and Prosperity of the Church, who spreads a fairer Sail of Profession then the *Temporary*? who seemes more eager of following Christ Coast after Coast then he? who is more expressive of his joy and delight in his approaching to Ordinances, who more confident in his boastings, of following Christ, and dying with him, when others leave him, then he? And yet if but a Cloud of an hand breadth arise in the Firmament of the Church, who is more full of boding feares and repentings in himself than ever he went so far? If Christ be but apprehended, and led away to the High Priests Pallace, to be there buffeted and spit upon, who more ready to say, *I know not the Man*, or if it be needfull to renounce all with an Oath? Now the ground of all this is, because he makes his Religion an *Art*, rather than a *Duty*, and doth rather *inform* and actuate it, then is *informed* and guided by it. He took it up not to *honour* God, but to better himself by it, and therefore resolves if he cannot be a *gainer*, he will be no *loser*. But how greatly differing from such an one is the true and real Christian?

who

who enters into Religion as into a Covenant of Marriage, which requires *Performances*, not *retractions*, and hath its *Praemeditata Commoda, & incommoda*, forethought of Burdens, as well as Delights. He looked upon the Church of Christ, not as a *Pleasure Boat*, which is onely for pastime, but as a *Ship*, that must expect *stormes*, though not fear a *wrack*, becaus Christ is in it. And therefore he is resolved with fortitude to withstand the Corruptions of the Times, to out-face the sins and scornes of Men, to be valiant for a Truth trampled upon, and not to be ashamed of a Persecuted Profession, and to bear up against the threats and malice of the most Potent Enemies with an unbended constancy. Did not *Peter* and *John* thus against a Synode of *Pharisees*? *Paul* against the Contradiction of the *Jewes*? *Athanasius* against the Power of *Constantius*, and the countenanced *Arians*? And *Chrysostom* against the pride and rage of *Eudoxia*? He indeed is not worthy of Christ who is allured onely to come to him upon expectations of Pleasure, nor he that is kept from him for the fear of insuing dangers. Do thou then, O blessed Saviour, make my heart upright in my coming unto thee, and fix my confidence so in thee, that Seas of troubles may never separate me in the least from thee; and if at any time, like thy timerous Disciples, I cry out, *Lord save me I perish*: do thou calme my *feares*, though not the *storm*, that so I may possess my soule in patience, and believe, that thou wilt either be my *Pilot*, to bring me safe to shoar, or my *Plank* to save me from ruine and perishing.

Meditation

Meditation XXXIV.

Upon the putting out of a Candle.

Light and darkneſs are in Scripture the two moſt uſual expreſſions by which happineſs and miſery are ſet forth unto us. *Hell* and *Heaven* which will one day divide the whole World between them, and become the ſole Manſions of endleſs woe, and bleſſedneſs, are deſcribed, the one to be a place of outward darkneſs, and the other an Inheritance in light. But it is obſervable alſo, that as the happineſs of worldly Men, and Believers is wholly differing; ſo the light to which the one and the other is reſembled, is greatly diſcrepant. The happineſs of the wicked worldling is compared unto a *Candle*, which is a feeble and dim light, and conſumes it ſelf by burning, or is put out by every ſmall puff of winde; but the proſperity and happineſs of the righteous is not *lucerna in domo*, as a Candle in an houſe; but *ſol in Cœlo*, as the Sun in the Heaven, which though it may be clouded, or eclipſed, yet can never be extinguiſhed, or interrupted in its courſe, but that it will ſhine more and more unto the perfect day, till it come to the fulneſs of Bliſs and Glory in Heaven. May we not then rather bemoan, than envy the beſt conditioned of Worldly Men, who comes out of a dark womb into a dark world, and hath no healing beames of the Sun of Righteouſneſs ariſing upon him to enlighten his pathes, or to direct his ſteps. What if he have ſome few ſtrictures of light, which the Creatures, that are no better than a *ruſh Candle* do ſeem to refreſh him with, and

and in the confidence of which he walkes for a time; yet alass! how suddenly do the damps of affliction make such a light to burne blew, and to expire, and to leave him as lost in the pitchy shades of anguish and despaire? How do the terrors of darkness multiply upon him every moment all those evills that a restless fancy can suggest? He sees nothing, and yet he speaks of gastly shapes that stand before him: He cannot tell who hurts him, and yet he complaines of the stinging of Serpents, of the torments of fiery flames, of the wracking of his limbes. If he have Cordialls put into his mouth, he spits them out again, as if they were the gall of Aspes, or if he have food ministred unto him he wholly rejects it, as that which will help to lengthen out a miserable life; and yet die he dares not least worse things befall him. If death approach, he then cries out, as *Crisorius* in *Gregory*, *Inducias vel usque ad mane, inducias vel usque ad mane*; a truce, a respit Lord untill the Morning. So great are his straits, as that he knowes not what to chuse, or what to fly. O that I could then affect some fond worldlings with the vanity and fickleness of their condition, who have nothing to secure them from an endless night of darkness, but the wan and pale light of a few earthly comforts, which are ofttimes far shorter than their lives, but never can be one moment longer. Have you no wisdom to consider, that your Life is but a span, and that all your delights are not so much? Have you never read of a state of Blessedness, in which it is said, that there shall be no night, and they need no Candle, *neither light of the Sun, for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever*? or are you so regardless of the future, as that you will resolvedly hazzard what ever can fall out, for the present satisfaction

of

of some inordinate desires? Do you not fear the threatning of him who hath said, *The Candle of the wicked shall be put out?* O then while it is called to day make *Davids* prayer, from your heart, say, *Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us, thou shalt put gladness in my heart more than in the time my Corn and Wine increased.*

Meditation XXXV.

Upon a Prison.

Seneca hath this saying, *Precogitati mali mollis ictus*, that the stroke of a fore-thought evil is more gentle and soft than if it were wholly unexpected; which suits well with Saint *Peters* counsel to the scattered Believers, not to think of the fiery trial, as if some strange and new thing had hapned unto them. A wise *Sufferer* therefore must do as a wise *builder*, sit down first and count his cost, lest afterwards he expose himself to shame and scorn. He must first view a Prison in his mind before he enter into it with his body, and throughly weigh what it is he must forgo, and what he must undergo, or else he will soon, like *Issachar*, couch under his burden, and faint in the day of adversity, his strength being small. For the change which a Prison makes is the greatest that can befall any, next to the Grave, and is but a little short of it, if not equal unto it. Who can set down the several sad evils which attend it in distinct particulars? And who can sum them up into a total, that will not amount unto a death? Is not *Liberty*, which every being naturally affects,

fects, turned into *Bondage*? Is not the *Society* of friends, which is the sauce, if not the food, of life, changed into *Solitude*? Is not *Light*, whose approaches were anciently saluted with *welcome light*, industriously shut out, to make both Bonds and Solitude the more irksome? Is not every *Sense* offended with objects that are displeasing unto them? What doth the *Eye* behold but the face of a grim Jayler? What doth the *Touch* feel unless it be hard Fetters and cold walls? What is the *Smell* affected with, unless it be a loathsome stench? What doth the *Ear* hear, but the rattling of Chains, or the groans of some who are breathing out their last? And what is the food that is tasted, unless it be the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction? And is it not then wonderful, that such a condition as this, which is as the very valley and shadow of death, should ever be passed thorough without any distracting fears, without heart breaking sorrows, yea, with great rejoycings in such tribulations? It is true, that some there be who, like *sullen Hawks*, live upon the *frets*, and bear many of these things out of the stoutness of their stomack and their natural courage. But alas! this is not to suffer as a Christian, who doth not suffer out of *obstinacy*, but out of *Conscience*; who is not supported by his own inherent *strength*, but by the *power* of God, which puts forth its self in such glorious effects oft times, as that it makes a greater change in the Prison for the better, than ever the vilest Prison can make in the Prisoner for the worse. Is it not the presence of the King that makes the Court, let the House be never so mean where he resides? What then can that place be less than a *Pallace* where the Presence of God dwells in a special manner? He that shall read in the Book of the *Revelations* of a City or place that had no

Temple

Temple in it, nor had no *Sun* or *Moon* to shine in it, and then break off, would sooner conjecture that he was beginning the description of some forlorn place under the Northern Pole, than of the heavenly *Jerusalem*: But when he shall understand that *God* and the *Lamb* are the *Temple* of it, and the glory of God and the Lamb are the Eternal Light shining in it, he will then say, as an awaked *Jacob*, *Surely this is none other but the house of God, and the place where himself dwelleth.* Such like thoughts must that man have of a Prison who knows no more of it, than what it is in appearance, a place of bondage, solitude, darkness, and sore wants; but he who hath in this condition once experienced the presence of God in it, how differently will he speak of it? Have not many of the Saints, when shut up in a Dungeon, dated their Letters to their Friends from their *Pallace*, from their *delectable Orchard*, from their *delicious Paradise*? Have they not gloried in their bonds, as being Gods Freemen, though mans Prisoners? Have they not in their solitude been ravished with the sweetness of that Communion they have had with God, who alone hath been better than a thousand Friends? Have they not been filled with *hidden Manna* in their souls, when their bodies have been pinched with the sharpness of Famine? Have they not in the midst of their Conflicts cried out, *If it be thus sweet to suffer for Christ, how full of Joy unspeakable will it be to reign with him?* May I not then say to this timorous Christian, as God did once to *Israel*, *Fear not to go down into* Egypt, *For I will go down with thee into* Egypt, *and I will surely bring thee up again.* Fear not to go into a Prison, in which God will be with you, and out of which he will deliver you with joy and triumph. It matters not what your pressures be if God put under

his

his Everlasting Arms, or who your Enemies be if he be your Friend; or what your sorrows be, if he be your Comforter. And this I may adde, that commonly in the greatest straits, he sheweth the greatest love, as waters run strongest in the narrowest passages. *As the sufferings of Christ* (saith *Paul*) *abound in us, so our Consolation aboundeth by Christ.* O therefore say as *David* did, *Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear none evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*

Meditation XXXVI.

Vpon the motion of the Sun on the Dyall.

IT was the saying of one, who was none of the least of the Philosophers, to him that asked him what he was born for? That it was to contemplate the Sun: But though it be not the *end* of mans *breath*, yet it may well be the *object* of his *thoughts*, in regard both of its *beauty* and *motion*. Holy *David* takes notice of them both in the same Psalm, in which he compared the Sun for its *Lustre* to a *Bridegroom* coming out of his Chamber cloathed in such shining Array, as may draw the eyes of Spectators towards him: And for its *swiftness* to a strong *Champion*, who runs his prescribed course, both speedily and unweariedly. *Tully*, in his *Academicall Questions*, saith, *Tanta incitatione fertur ut ejus celeritas quanta sit ne cogitari quidem possit.* It is whirled about with that vehemency that the greatness of the Suns speed cannot easily be imagined. Is it not then a Riddle, that at the same time when it travels thousands

of miles in the *Heavens* it should make so slow a motion and progress on the *Dyall*, as not to move above the breadth of an inch or two? To the quickest eye its motion is imperceptible, and it so moves, as we can only say it hath moved, not that it doth. Now from whence comes this inequality, but from the vast disproportion between the Heavens and the Earth, the one being but as a Center or small prick to an immense Circumference. O how happy and regular also would the lives and actions of men be if after the same manner they were moved to *heavenly* and *earthly* objects? To the one with a swiftness like to that of the Sun in the *Firmament*: To the other with an insensibleness, like to that of the Sun upon the *Dyall*. Surely such a disproportion doth the differing worth and excellency between the one and the other justly challenge in our pursuit of them. Is it not meet that he who casts a single glance of his eye to the Creature, should bestow a thousand looks on his Saviour? And when he creeps to one as a *Snail*, to fly to the other as the *Eagle* to the Carkass? He alone moves to God as much as he ought, who moves to him as much as he can, and strives to repair the imperfection of that motion, with a real dislike and regret of the slowness of his own heart to the best of goods. But alass if the rule by which men walk must be thus bounded, or dilated according to the object to which they move, where shall we find that person that thus proportions the out-goings of his soul in his care, desires, or industry? If the standard and measure of goodness should be taken, from the unweariedness of mens travels, from the strength of their affections, or from the fixed bent of their resolutions to obtain what they design to themselves as their end: who must not then put the Crown of blessedness upon

the

the head of the Creature which ought to be set at the foot of the Creator? Who must not then conclude, that it is better building Tabernacles here, than seeking a Country which is above? Do not men contract their hearts to the things of Heaven, and dilate them to what is below? Do they not run and pant, to the very breathing out of their souls, after perishing vanities, when they cannot be drawn to set one foot towards spiritual and divine Excellencies? Do they not take the wings of the Morning, and fly to the utmost end of the Earth in their musings and thoughts to find out riches that will not profit in the day of wrath? when their Essaies to Heaven are as weak as the Grashoppers, who give only a small flirt upwards and then falls down to the Earth again. O that I could with plenty of tears bemoan that monstrous *Ataxie* and perverseness which sin hath wrought in the most noble parts of man. Was not that agility of mind given unto him by God, that he might have his Conversation in Heaven, though his abode was on Earth? And that he might enter into the *holy* of *holies*, not like the High Priest, once in a year, but in every prayer and duty, like a winged Angel, behold the face of God, and look into those things that are within the Veil? But now alas! he can only, like that lapsed Angel, compass the earth to and fro in his thoughts, and descend as low as hell in his lusts, but cannot raise himself above the world to the performance of the least good. I feel, O my God, continually the sad change which sin hath made in me, not so much destroying my Faculties, as perverting them; I have not lost the use of them, but the rectitude of them. I am no more weary of sinning, than a swift stream of running; the same weight of sin that hinders me from running the race which is set before me, hurries me to

evil, and makes me, through the impulsions of Satan, to gather strength by an accessory impression. In the births of sin I am, like the *Hebrew* women, lively and quick of delivery; but in the bringing forth of whatever is good, like a slow *Egyptian* that needs the aide of a Midwife. I therefore beg of thee holy Lord to heal my distempers by thy grace, and to renew me in the spirit of my mind that I may run the way of thy Commandments when thou hast enlarged my heart.

Meditation XXXVII.

Upon a Sun-Dyal and a Clock.

THese two Artificial measures of time give one and the same account of its motions, but in a very differing, if not contrary, manner. The *Clock* doth it by a motion of its own; but the *Sun-Dyall*, while it self is fixed, by an extrinsick motion of the Sun upon those Lines drawn upon it *effects* the same thing. And this occasioned me to think in what a differing way the same services and duties of Religion are done by those that profess it. Some, like *Clocks*, have a Spring of motions in themselves, and the weight that quickens and actuates it is love: They pray, confer, exercise holiness in their Conversation in a progressive manner, Salvation being nearer to them than when they first believed. Others again are like *Sun-Dyals*, that are as useless posts in a gloomy day, and are destitute of all principles of motion. The Sun moveth upon them, but they stand still: The Spirit comes upon them, as it did on *Saul*, but themselves are not in the least moved

ved by those duties that others may think they profit by. There is a light and shine which passeth upon their gifts and abilities that may render them useful as well as visible unto others, but it effecteth no alteration in their hearts to the bettering of themselves. What divine Visions and Prophesies did *Balaam* both see and utter concerning *Israel*? And how remarkable is the Preface which he sets before them? *The man whose eyes are open hath said*, yet his heart is fixed to his lust of Covetousness, and he is so far from taking the least step towards their *Tents*, which with admiration he beholds to be goodly, as that he gives *Balack* counsel how to destroy them. Let not then any rest in a bare illumination or transient work of the Spirit upon them, as if that such things would be sufficient evidences of the goodness of their condition. Light may make a good head, but it is heat and motion that must make a good heart, without which all profession of Religion is but an unsavoury Carkass. Be wise therefore O Christians, and build not the foundation of your eternal happiness upon such uncertain principles. May not the Spirit *assist* where it never *inhabits*? May it not *move* upon him, whom it never *quickens*? Were not many *workers of iniquity*, who were *workers of miracles*? Were not many famous for their *Prophesies*, who were infamous for their *Profaneness*? Are not such things made by Christ, the plea of many in the last day for their admittance into heaven, whom he will not know? Why then should any be so foolish to make that a Plea to the Judge which he knows beforehand will be rejected? The best way to discern our condition, is not to argue the goodness of it from the light which the Spirit darts in upon us, but by the motions which it produceth in us. As many as are the Sons of God are led by the

Spirit of God, in a constant way of progression, from grace to grace, from vertue to vertue. Such light, as it is sudden in its *Eruptions*, so it is also in its *Interruptions*; the one oft times are as speedy and momentary as the other. Look therefore to the *attractions* of the Spirit by which you are moved, & drawn to walk in holy waies, rather than to such *motions* of the Spirit, which pass only upon you, but do not beget any motion or stirring in you.

Meditation XXXVIII.

Upon the payment of a Pepper-corn.

LOgicians have a Maxime, that, *Relationes sunt minimæ entitatis & maximæ efficaciæ*, Relations are of the smallest Entity, and of the greatest efficacy: The truth of which may appear in the payment of a single Pepper-corn, that *Freeholders* pay to their *Landlord*, they do it not with any hope or intent to enrich him; but to acknowledge that they hold all from him. To effect the one it is of too mean a value, yet it preserves the *Lords* right as fully as a greater Rent, and aggravates the *Tenants* folly to withhold, more than if the demands had been higher. To such an one may be justly said, what *Naamans* Servant spake unto him, *If the Prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? How much rather then, when he saith to thee, wash and be clean?* If the condition which meer bounty happily hath made so easie, had been by the same hand and power restrained to a more costly and ample homage, ought it not to have been performed?

How

How much more when nothing is required, but what may witness a dependency and not burden it? How inexcusable then must the ingratitude of those men be, who receiving all their blessings from God, withhold that *Pepper-corn* of praise and honour from him, which is the only thing that they can pay, or that he expects? To cast the least Mite into his Treasury, which may adde to its riches, is beyond the Line of men or Angels, for if it could admit an increase, the abundance of it were not infinite: but to adore its fulness, and to acknowledge that from it they derive theirs, is the duty of all that partake of it. This is the only homage that those Stars of the Morning, and sons of God, who behold his face, do give in heaven, and this is it which the Children of men should give on Earth. But alas! from how few are those sacred dues tendred to God, though all be his debtors? Doth not the rich man, when wealth floweth in upon him like a river, forget that the Lord only giveth him power to get riches? And sacrifice unto his Net, and burn Incense unto his Drag? Is it not the sin that God chargeth all *Israel* with, that *they rejoyce in a thing of nought, and say, have we not taken horns to us by our own strength?* Yea, doth he not expresly say, that he will not give his glory unto another? Shall any man then take it unto himself? And yet what stoln bread is so sweet to any taste as the secret nimmings & purloynings of Gods glory are unto the palates of most? If any design be effected, they think that their wisdom hath brought it about; if any difficulties be removed, they ascribe it to their industry; if success and victory do build upon their Sword, it is their own arm, and right hand that hath obtained it. O how great is that pride and unthankfulness which reigns in the hearts of men, who affect to rob God, rather than to

honour him, and to deny him to be the Author of what they poſſeſs, than to acknowledge their Tenure that they hold all in *Capite*. Stealing from men may be acquitted again with ſingle, or double, with fourfold, or ſevenfold reſtitution: But the filching from Gods glory can never be anſwered; for who can give any thing to him which he hath not received? Others may ſteal of neceſſity, to ſatisfie their hunger; but ſuch violate out of pride and wantonneſs the *Exchequer of heaven*, and ſhall never eſcape undetected, or unpuniſhed. Conſider therefore this all ye who are ready to kiſs your own hands for every bleſſing that comes upon you, to what danger you expoſe your ſelves, while ye rob God, *whoſe name is Jealous*, who will vindicate the glory of his neglected goodneſs in the ſevere triumphs of his impartial Juſtice. It is *Bernards* Expreſſion, *Uti datis, ut innatis eſt maxima ſuperbia*, to uſe Gods gifts as things inbread in us is the higheſt arrogancy, and what leſs can it merit, than the very condemnation of the Devil? Whoſe firſt ſin (as ſome Divines conceive) was an affectation of independant happineſs, without any reſpect or habitude unto God. I cannot a little wonder, that the blackneſs of his ſin, and the dreadfulneſs of his Fall, ſhould not make all to fear the leaſt ſhadow and ſemblance of ſuch a crime in themſelves as muſt bring upon them the like ruine. Look upon him ye proud ones, and tremble, who are abettors of *Nature* againſt *Grace*, and reſolve the ſalvation of man ultimately into the freedom of his Will, rather than into the efficacy of Gods Grace; who in the work of Converſion make the Grace of God to have only the work of a *Midwife*, to help the Child into the world, but not to be the Parent and ſole Author of it. Is not this to croſs the great deſign of the Goſpel, which is to exalt

exalt the honour of God and Christ? that *he that glorieth might glory in the Lord.* And is not every tittle of the Gospel as dear to God, as every tittle of the Law? Can then any diminish ought from it and be guiltless? Oh fear then to take the least due from God, who hath threatned to take his part out of the Book of Life, and out of the holy City, and from the things which are written in the Book of God. *Non est devotionis dedisse prope totum, sed fraudis retinuisse vel minimum,* It is not devotion, saith *Prosper* rightly against his *Collator*, to acknowledge almost all from God, but accursed theft to ascribe though but a very little to our selves. Lord therefore, whatever others do, keep me humble, that as I receive all from thee, so I may render that tribute of praise which thou expectest from me both chearfully, and faithfully; and though it can adde nothing to thy perfection, no more than my beholding and admiring the Suns light can encrease it, yet let me say, as holy *David* did, *Not unto us O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory for thy mercy and for thy truths sake.*

Meditation XXXIX.

Vpon the Bucket and the Wheel.

THe saying of *Democritus*, which he spake concerning *Philosophical* truth, that it did *latitare in puteo*, hide it self, and take up its abode in a dark and deep Well, may much more be affirmed of *Theological* truth when the whole Doctrine of the Gospel is called the *Mystery of Christ*, and *the great Mystery of Godliness*,

that there should be three *distinct Persons* in one Essence, and two distinct Natures in one Person. That *Virginity* should conceive, *Eternity* be born; *Immortality* dye, and *Mortality* rise from death to life. Are not these, and many more of the like intricacy, unparalelled mysteries? May we not then justly say, as the *Samaritan* woman did to our Saviour when he asked water of her, *Puteus profundus est*, the Well is deep, and who can descend into it, or fathom it? And yet such is the pride and arrogancy of many men, as that, not contenting themselves with the *simplicity* of believing, many make *Reason* the sole standard whereby to measure both the *Principles* and *Conclusions* of Faith, for which it is as unapt as the weak Eye of a Bat to behold the Sun when it shineth in its full strength; or the Bill of a small Bird to receive into it the Ocean. These high mysteries are not to be *scanned*, but to be believed; the knowledge and certainty of which doth not arise from the *evidence* of reason, but from the *revelation* made of them in holy Scriptures; the mouth of God, who is truth it self, and cannot lye, hath spoken them, and therefore it cannot be otherwise. But must then *reason* be wholly shut out as a useless thing in the Christian *Religion*, or must it be confined to the *agenda* matters of *duty and morality*, in which it cannot be denied to be both of necessary and constant use? Surely even the *Credenda*, also the *Doctrines* and points which are properly of *Faith*, do not refuse the sober use of *Reason*, so it be imployed as an *Handmaid*, and not as a *Mistress*: I have therefore thought that Faith is as the Bucket, which can best descend this deep Well of mystery, and that *Reason* is as the Wheel, which stands over the mouth of it, and keeps alwaies its certain and fixed distance: But yet by its motion is instrumental

both

both to let down the *bucket*, and also to draw it up again. Faith discovers the deep things of God, and then reason teacheth us to submit our selves and it to the obedience of Faith, that so it is. But it never becomes more *foolish* and *dangerous* then when it busies its self in inquiries, and makes *Nicodemus* his question, *How can these things be?* then it turnes giddy, and loseth its self in distracted rounds and motions. Alas! how unlike would the wayes and Counsels of God be unto himself, if they were no other but such as the Wisest of Men could trace out? How little glory would Faith also give to God, if it did not put forth its strength in asserting his Power to effect greater things then can fall within the compass of Natural disquisition? Yea, how should the Gospel, in its Institutions, Doctrines, and Worship, be acquitted of the *Jewes* stumbling at it, as dishonourable to their Law; and the *Gentiles* deriding of it, as absurd, in their *Philosophy*, if that Reason must be the measure of its Mysteries? Nature is so far from finding out what the Gospel discovers, as that it cannot yield unto it, when it is revealed, without a spirit of Faith to assist it. Be wise therefore, O Christians, and set bounds to your Reason, beyond which it may not pass, as *Moses* did to the *Israelites*, whilest Faith descendeth into the deeps of Gospel Mysteries, which *Angells* with stretched out necks have more *desire* to pry into, then ability perfectly to understand. Now the boundary of Reason is, *Conferre & inferre*; to *confer* one Scripture with another; and to *infer* Conclusions, and to deduce Instructions thence, by a clear Logicil Discourse. But if it go further to gaze, it may justly fear to be smitten of God: and like a *Pyoneer*, or bold Miner, which digs in too far for his rich Veine of *Ore*, meet with a damp which choakes him. My Prayer

therefore

therefore shall be that of the *Apostles* to Christ, *Adde nobis fidem: Lord increase our faith.* For if my faith do not exceed, my reason, though advanced to as high a pitch as ever *Solomon* had, yet might I well be numbered among those, whom St. *Peter* saith *are blinde, and cannot see afar off.*

Meditation XL.

Vpon Banishment.

EXile is a Change of place that brings no evil with it, but in opinion; a Complaint, and affliction wholly imaginary, is the description some have made of it. But it seemes to me to be rather a *Stoicks* vaunt, than a *Christians* just estimate, of the evils of that condition. What trial else would it have been of *Abrahams* Faith, to leave his *Country, Kindred, and Fathers House, and to go to a Land God would shew him?* or why did God injoyn *Israel* to pitty Strangers; because themselves had been Strangers in the Land of *Ægypt.* Why have *Legislators* deemed it as a punishment for grand Crimes, and next to Capital? or why have many looked upon it as worse than death, chusing rather the *lot* of the *Goat* that was to be Sacrificed, then the lot of the *Scape Goat*, which was to be sent into the Wilderness? is it not because (as *Philo* saith) death is the full end of all evils? but Banishment the beginning of many new ones? Want, Scorn, Oppressions, Unjust Jealousies, are the daily hard Measures that Exiles must expect to meet with; he must thank him who demands his Coat, that he asketh not his Life;

Life; and he muſt oft times redeem his Life, with that little Money which he hath, that ſhould buy him Bread to preſerve it. He muſt be armed with nothing but patience, leaſt he be apprehended as one that hath in deſign the death of ſome other. And yet how many Arguments of comfort can my thoughts ſuggeſt to ſuch Chriſtians, who for the Truths ſake either dread this Croſs, or feel it. They break forth ſo on the right hand, and on the left, as that methinks I may ſay, Sing O ye Baniſhed, cry aloud, for more are the comforts of the deſolate, than the comforts of thoſe that ſit under the ſhadow of their own roof. I will not tell you that you have the ſame Sun and Moon to ſhine upon you that Kings have; that the Stars appear unto you in the ſame greatneſs and beauty which they do to others. That you enjoy the ſame common Elements that all do. Theſe, and ſuch like *topicks* are to be plentifully found among the *Moraliſts*. But all their *Precepts* and *Sentences* are like Arrowes that fall ſhort of the Mark. They could never reach that ſolid contentment they levelled at. Hear then ye dejected Chriſtians what your comforts are, whoſe Croſſes are no more than others, and whoſe ſupports are farr greater. Are you Baniſhed from your Native Country? what other condition do you undergo then *Abraham* did, the *Father of the Faithfull*, and the *Friend* of *God*, and will you murmur if God deal with you no worſe then with his Favorite? if you are out of your own Land, do you not ſtill tread upon your Fathers ground? is not *the Earth the Lords, and the fullneſs of it*? did never any thrive in a ſtrange Soyle, and like tranſplanted Trees gain by the Change? have ye forgot what God did for *Joſeph* in *Egypt*? or for *Daniel and his Aſſociates* in their Captivity? who like Stars when they ſet

ſet in one Hemiſphere, did riſe glorioufly in another? But if ſtill you be impatient, and in diſlike with your Eſtate, let me ask you if the beſt of a wicked Mans condition be not worſe? Is it not better to hunger and thirſt for righteouſneſs ſake, then to fare deliciouſly every day with the rich Glutton in the Goſpel? Is it not more eligible to be an *Iſraelite* in the Wilderneſs, then to be a Courtier in *Egypt*? can you not ſpeak better of your *Miſeries* then wicked Men can do of their *Mercies*? you may ſay, bleſſed *Hunger*, bleſſed *Poverty*, bleſſed *Mourning*, bleſſed *Perſecutions* and *Revilings*; Chriſt himſelf having bleſſed your Afflictions, and alſo curſed their enjoyments: He hath entailed an eternal *woe* upon all thoſe things wherein they place their welfare; their *Riches*, their *Fullneſs*, their *Mirth*, their *Applauſe*, and *Credit* with all Men: and he hath promiſed to them that endure temptations a Crown of Life when they are tried. Be not therefore diſmayed O ye of little Faith, who have every bitter thing at preſent ſweetned with Promiſes, and within a little while ſhall have all the hardſhips of a deſart, turned into the Plenty of an Heavenly *Canaan*. And yet methinks ſome there be, who are ſtill unſatisfied, and ask if it be nothing to part with dear Relations, and ſociety of Friends? and to be caſt upon ſtrange Faces, and Languages, that they underſtand not? to be at once in great meaſure both deaf and dumb, not hearing what others ſay to them, and being alſo unable to ſpeak the leaſt word to others. That theſe are ſore evils I ſhall not make it any part of my task to deny; But yet how many are there who have expoſed themſelves to all theſe evils, and have undergone them voluntarily, which you ſuffer out of conſtraint? have not ſome for curioſity ſake, and a thirſt of knowledg travelled through vaſt

vaſt and dangerous Wilderneſſes, and borne, with much patience, the exceſs of heat and cold? Have not others out of a covetous deſire of gain parted with Friends and Country for many yeares? may I not then ſend the *faint-hearted Chriſtian* to learn of the *reſolute Worldling*, as *Solomon* doth the *Sluggard* to the *Piſmire*; ſhall he ſet an higher eſtimate upon Earthly Treaſures then you upon Heavenly? ſhall he out-face dangers that you ſhrink at? ſhall he quit Parents and Children that are pieces of himſelf, and imbrace ſolitude in forraign Regions, and ſhall you reckon your ſelf as free among the dead while you do the ſame thing? O what advantages have you above him, both to do and ſuffer? In your *ſolitude* you may ſay as Chriſt did in his, *Yet am I not alone, becauſe the Father is with me.* In your Sorrowes you may glory as *Paul* did, *This is our rejoycing, the teſtimony of our Conſcience, that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity we have had our Converſation in the World.* In the loſs and ſpoil of your Eſtates, you may pray, as *Paulinus* did, when the *Gothes* ranſacked *Nola*: *Domine, ne excrucier propter aurum & argentum; ubi enim omnia mea ſunt tu ſcis:* Lord, let not the loſs of theſe things diſquiet me: for thou knoweſt where I have laid up all my treaſures. In your Baniſhment you may comfort your ſelf with the common lot of all believers, who are no other then Pilgrims, and Strangers, while they are at home in the Body, and abſent from the Lord? I ſhall add no more but an excellent ſaying of *Baſil*, *Cui adhuc patria ſolùm dulcis eſt, minùs delicatus eſt, cui omnis terra patria fortis eſt, cui omnis terra exilium ſanctus eſt*, He to whom his Native Countrey is onely ſweet, is too delicate: he to whom every Land is his Countrey, is valiant; and he to whom all Earth is a Baniſhment, is truely holy.

Meditation

Meditation XLI.

Upon the Breast and the Sucking-Bottle.

THe *Word* of God, by which Men are turned from darkness unto light, is sometimes compared unto *Seed*, and sometimes unto *Milk*; and the *Ministers* of it, sometimes unto *Fathers*, and sometimes unto *Nurses*: This double relation points forth their double Duty, which is not onely as *spiritual Fathers* to beget Men unto Christ; but as *nursing Mothers*, to give them the *full Breasts* of the sincere Milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby, and of new-borne Babes may become strong in the Faith, and filled with all knowledge and wisdome in the things of God. But how is this done? is it by *Reading* onely the Scriptures, without giving the Sense, though that be a Publick Ordinance of God, and highly to be honoured of all, or by a diligent and well digested *Preaching* of them, in which the Truths delivered are sucked in as Milk from the Breast that partakes of the warmth and spirits of the Nurse? Some Ministers who have consulted more for their own Ease then their Peoples Profit, have endeavoured to maintain *Reading* to be *Preaching*, as if that were a sufficient discharge of their Duty. But what then will become of the Apostles question? *Who is sufficient for these things?* it should then be rather who is not sufficient? or of what use will be his Counsel, *To Preach in season, and out of season, and to divide*

vide the Word of God aright, as a workman that needeth not be ashamed. True it is, that if Preaching be taken largely, for any Declaration, or Publishing of the Word of God, it cannot be denyed to be Preaching; but if it be taken strictly for Preaching, by way of *Office*, and for *Ministerial* Publishing of the Gospel, then it is quite another thing. Was there not a wide difference between the Woman of *Samaria* her making known of Christ, and the Apostles Preaching of him; or between *Andrewes* calling of his brother *Peter* before he was put into his Apostolical Office, and his Preaching of Christ when Commissionated by him? and what less difference is there between a Naked Reading of the Scripture, or some other set Discourses, and the Powerfull Preaching of the Word? But if Trial and Experience could better Evince than Argument, those who justifie the Opinion by their Practise; I could wish that such might bring forth their Children, who have lived wholly upon the singular meanes of *Reading*, and let their Countenance be looked upon, and the Countenance of those who have had the Word duly *Preached* unto them, and then let others Judge whether their Countenance appear as fair and fat as their Brethrens. O how quickly would it be discerned which they are, which have received their nourishment from the *Breast*, and which from the *Bottle*? it would soon be judged that the weak are the Flock of *Laban*, and the strong the Flock of *Jacob*, which God hath by far blessed above the other. Think then upon it, O ye sloathfull ones, to whose care God hath commited the wellfare of many Soules, how you will answer your neglect to God! If the Chief Officer was afraid that his withholding the Kings appointed Meat from *Daniel* and his *Companions*, might indanger his head to his Lord, should he see their Faces

worse

worse liking than the Children of their sort; what cause will ye have to fear the displeasure of Christ when he shall behold the wan and pale lookes of those for whom he died, by your detaining the Breast from them, who should have been nourished up in the words of Faith, and good Doctrine? Nor shall ye, O Christians, who slight Ordinances, and turn your back upon the Breasts of Consolation, which are held forth unto you, escape any better then the Ministers who deny them to their People: If it be a sin to do the one, it is no less, if not greater, in you, to do the other. They sin against the Soules of others, and you sin against your own Soules: And yet how great are the numbers upon whom the guilt of this Crime may be Charged? Some think that they are past their Childhood, and therefore *Wean* themselves; they know as much as their *Teachers* can tell them, and to what end then should they still give them their Attendance; to hanker after the Breast is for Babes, not for grown Persons? But are not they who thus speak puffed up, and know nothing as they ought? Is not this whole life a state of Infancy in respect of perfection? doth not the Apostle say, that *we see but darkly, and know but in part.* Why then should the old *Matrons* be more ashamed of these Breasts, then the young *Timothies*? *David* Professed himself as a weaned Child from the *World*, but never from the *Word*. Others please themselves, that though they go not to Hear, yet they Read good Books, and better Sermons at home, than their Ministers can make; and so take themselves not to be less zealous, but onely more discreet than their Brethren who do not the like. And yet who can excuse such Persons from the guilt both of folly and wickedness? Is it not folly to refuse the warm *breast*, and to suck the Milk from

from the *bottle*, when it is dispirited, and hath lost both its warmth and lively taste? and what less difference is there between a Sermon in the *Pulpit*, and in the *Press*? Is it not also wickedness to offer *Sacriledge* for *Sacrifice*, and to rob God of one Duty, to pay him another; to withhold the greater, and to seem Conscientious in the less? Are they not in thus doing *fures de se*, thieves to their own Soules, depriving themselves of the profit of both, while they are willfull neglecters of each. Be wise therefore, O Christians, in keeping up an high esteem of the Word Preached, and be alwayes as Babes for hunger and desire after it; though not for knowledg and understanding in it: And remember that there is no way so dangerous to lessen your desires, as to keep your selves fasting from it. For the Word of God still creates new appetites, as it satisfies the old; and enlargeth the capacities of the Soul, as it fills it. Use good Books as Apothecaries do their *Succedanea*, one simple to supply the want of another; when the Preacher cannot be had then make use of them; but let it rather be to stay the stomach in the absence of an Ordinance, then to satisfie it. And when you enjoy both, say as *Aristotle* sometimes did of the *Rhodian* and *Lesbian* Wine, when he had tasted of both; that the *Rhodian* was good too, but the *Lesbian* was the pleasanter. Holy Books are good, and relish well, but the Word Preached is more sweet; the one is as the Wine the Bridegroom provided at the Marriage Feast, and the other as that which Christ made, which was easily discerned by the Governour, who knew not whence it was, to be by far the better.

Meditation XLII.

Vpon Mixtures.

THe wiſe God hath ſo tempered the whole Eſtate of Man in this life, as that it conſiſteth altogether of *Mixtures*; There is no ſweet without ſower, nor ſower without ſweetneſs. All ſimples, in any kinde, would prove dangerous, and be as uncorrected drugs, which adminiſtered unto the Patient would not recover him, but deſtroy him. Conſtant Sorrow without any Joy would *ſwallow us up*; and ſimple Joy without any Grief would *puff us up*, both extreames would agree alike in our ruine: he being in as dangerous a caſe who is ſwolne with Pride, as he who is overwhelmed with Sorrow. This *Mixture* then, though it ſeem *penall* and prejudicial to our comfort, is yet *Medicinall*, and is by God, as a wiſe Phyſician, ordered as a Diet moſt ſutable to our Condition; and if we did but look into the grounds of it, we ſhall find cauſe to acknowledge Gods wiſe Providence, and to frame our hearts to a ſubmiſſion of his will, without murmuring at what he doth. For have we not two Natures in us, the *Spirit* and *Fleſh*, the *New*, and *Old Man*? have we not *twins* in our Womb, our Counter-luſtings, and our Counter-willings? Are we not as Plants that are ſeated between the two different Soiles of *Earth* and *Heaven*? Is there not then a neceſſity of a mixed Diet, that is made up of two contraries? The Phyſician is not leſs loyal to his Prince if he give to him an unpleaſing *Vomit*, and to a poor Man a cheering *Cordiall*, becauſe his

Applications

Applications are not according to the dignity of the Perſon, but to the quality of the Diſeaſe: neither is God the leſs kind when he puts into our hand the bitter *Cup* of affliction to drink of, then when he makes us to taſte of the *Flaggons* of his ſweeteſt wine. *Paul* his *Thorn in the Fleſh*, what ever the meaning of it be, was uſefull to keep down that tumor of pride, which the abundance of Revelations might have expoſed him unto; and ſo joyned together they were like the *rod* and the *Honey* which enlightned *Jonathans* eyes: when he had taſted the ſweetneſs of the one, God would have him feel the ſmart of the other. At the ſame time alſo when God bleſſed *Jacob*, he Crippled him, that he might not think above what was meet of his own ſtrength, or aſcribe his prevailing to the vehemency of his Wreſtling, rather then to Gods gracious condeſcention. Yea who is it that hath not experienced ſuch *Mixtures* to be the conſtant Methods which he uſeth towards his deareſt Children? what are the lives of the beſt Chriſtians but as a Rainbow, which conſiſts half of the moiſture of a Cloud, and half of the light and beames of the Sun? *Weeping* (ſaith David) *may endure for a Night, but Joy cometh in the Morning.* And what other thing doth the Apoſtle ſpeak of himſelf, when he gives the *Corinthians* an account of his Condition? *As dying, and behold we live: as chaſtened, and not killed: as ſorrowfull, and yet alwayes rejoycing: as poore, yet making many rich: as having nothing, but yet poſſeſſing all things.* Bleſſed then is he who doth without repining yield himſelf to the diſpoſe of Divine Providence, rather then accuſe it, and looks not ſo much to what at preſent is gratefull to the ſenſe, as to what for the future will be profitable to the whole. For in theſe Mixtures, *Magna latent beneficia etſi non fulgeant;*

ant, great advantages do lye hid, though not shine forth. Hereby we are put upon the exercise of all those Graces which are accommodated to our imperfect state here below, whose acts shall not be compleated in Heaven, but shall all cease, as being not capacitated for a Fruition: and yet are of great use while we are on this side Heaven. How necessary is *Patience* to bear up the Soul under trials, that it fret not against God who inflicts them? How greatly doth *Hope* temper any present sower by its expectation of some happy change that may and will follow, and so wörketh joy in the midst of sadness? How even to wonder doth Faith manifest its power in all distresses, when it apprehends that there are no degrees of extremity unrelieveable by the Arm of God, or inconsistent with his compassions and friendship? Again, such Mixtures serve to work in us a greater hatred of sin, and an earnest longing after Glory; in which, our life, light, joyes, are all pure, and everlasting. Our life is without any seed of death, our light without any shadow of darkness, and our joyes endless *Hallelujahs*, without the interruption of one sigh. Therefore are we burdened in our Earthly Tabernacle, that we should the more groan to be clothed upon with our house which is from Heaven. Therefore yet have we the remainders of sin, by which we are unlike God; and the first-fruits onely of the spirit, by which we resemble him; that we might long and wait for the *Adoption* and *Redemption*, wherein what ever is blended and imperfect shall be done away. When not to sin, which is here onely our *Duty*, shall be the top branch of our reward and blessedness. O holy Lord, I complain not of my present lot, for though it be not free from mixture, yet it is greatly differing from what others find and feel, whose lines are not fallen

fallen in so fair a place: But still I say, when shall I dwell in that blessed Country where sorrows dye, and joys cannot? Into which Enemy never entred, and from which a Friend never parted? When shall I possess that Inheritance which is a *Kingdom* for its greatness, and a *City* for its beauty, where there is Society without Envy, and rich Communications of good without the least diminution.

Meditation XLIII.

Upon Time and Eternity.

THE two Estates of this and the other World are measured *by Time*, and *by Eternity*, as their just and proper measures, there being nothing in this World which is not as *transient* as Time, nor in the other which is not as *fixed* and lasting as Eternity. How inexpressibly then must the *good* and *evil*, the *happiness* and the *misery* of those two Estates differ from each other? What is the duration of all earthly greatness in respect of the stability of heavenly glory, but as a flash of lightning to a standing Sun in the Firmament; or as a spark ascending from a furnace, to a never setting Star? What are the most fiery trials of this life, either for *intension*, or *length*, unto the everlasting burnings and scorchings of hell; but as the soft and gentle heat of a blushing face, unto the constant flames and torments of the bowels? What are Racks, Stone, Collick, Strangury, Convulsions, heaped together into an extream horrour, but as the simple grudgings of an Ague, to the desperate rage and anguish which the

leaſt bite of that worm that dies not creates in the loweſt faculty of the ſoul? There are additions to things which are *limited*, and *diminuent* terms of that to which they are annexed; and contain in them (as *Logicians* ſpeak) *oppoſitum in oppoſito*, one oppoſite in another. He that ſaith, a *dead man*, or a *painted Lion*, by ſaying more, ſaith leſs than if he had ſaid but *a man*, or a *Lion* only, without any ſuch additions; it is all one in effect as if he had ſaid no *man*, no *Lion*: For a *dead man* is not a man, neither is a *painted Lion* a Lion. Such are the additions of Time, which put to *good* or *evil* expreſſe leſs than if nothing had been added. He that ſaith, *happineſs for a ſeaſon*, or *ſorrow for a time*, ſaith leſs than if he had ſaid happineſs or ſorrow only: For perfect *happineſs* or *ſorrow* cannot be circumſcribed in the narrow limits of Time, no more than Immenſity in the points of a place. What is happineſs that will expire, but miſery at a diſtance? Or what is ſorrow that endures only for a time, but an evil, ſupported by hope? But adde Eternity to *good* or *evil*, and it makes the good to be infinitely better, and the evil to be infinitely worſe. Can I then do leſs than wonder, that men, who carry eternal ſouls in their boſoms, ſuch as are of kin to *Seraphims*, yea, advanced to the participation of the Divine Nature, that are the immediate Subjects of Endleſs woe, or bliſs, ſhould yet ſo live, *Ac ſi fabula eſſet omnis eternitatas*, as if Eternity were a fable; as if they had neither God to ſerve, or ſouls to ſave? May I not ſay, be aſtoniſhed O heavens at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very deſolate, as the Lord himſelf did at *Iſraels* folly? What greater ſtupidity can there be, than this which moſt are guilty of, to buſie themſelves, like *Martha*, about periſhing trifles, and to neglect the one thing which is neceſſary? To be

thoughtful

thoughtfull of things below, and ſeldom think of heaven, till death ſummon them to leave Earth? To make Salvation the by-work of their lives, and the fulfilling the apperites of the fleſh their chiefeſt task and care? Were it not a ſtrange thing if a man, who is to be judged on the morrow, and to receive the ſentence either of a cruel death, or of a rich and honourable eſtate, could not keep in mind the concernments of the next approaching day, without tying ſome Scarlet thread upon his finger as a *ſignificant Ceremony* to remember him? Or the writing of ſome *Caveats* upon the poſts of the Priſon which might hint unto him what danger his life is in? Is it not much more ſtrange that the weighty matters of eternal life, or eternal death, ſhould not by their own greatneſs preſs the heart of man unto a conſtant remembrance of them, eſpecially when he knoweth not what a day may bring forth? Can the miſcarriage of ſuch a perſon be other than dreadful, when their *follies*, as well as their *pains*, ſhall make them to gnaſh their teeth, and to curſe themſelves for the neglect of that great Salvation which hath been often tendred them in the Goſpel? When they ſhall feel everlaſtingly, what they could never be perſwaded for to fear? When they ſhall be convinced that at a far cheaper rate they might have been Saints in Heaven than *Salamanders* in Hell? O that I could therefore awaken and excite all thoſe whom the preſent enjoyments of the world ſerve as *Opium* to caſt them into a deep ſleep, and will happily be angry with thoſe that ſeek to raiſe them out of it, though they keep them from periſhing in it. And how can I better do it, than in St. *Chryſoſtomes* expreſſions to this purpoſe: Suppoſe a man, ſaith he, much deſirous of ſleep, and in his perfect mind, had an offer made of one nights

ſweet reſt, upon condition to be puniſhed an hundred years for it, would he except of his ſleep upon ſuch terms? Now, do not they (who would be loath to be reputed fools) do far worſe, that for the ſhort fruition of a few tranſient delights, hazard a double Eternity, the loſs of an Eternity of bleſſedneſs, and the ſuſtaining of an Eternity of miſeries? for what other proportion can all earthly things bear to heavenly, in reſpect of their duration, than a few beatings of the pulſe, or twinklings of the eye, unto Myriads of Ages? Be then timely wiſe ye worldlings in a frequent conſideration of your eternal being, that you may not paſs your life away in a dream of happineſs, and awake in the horrour of a begun Eternity in miſery. Say unto your ſelves, are we not in the world, as the Child conceived is in the womb, not to abide there, but to come out in a due time to a more full and free life? Why then do we fondly think of building Tabernacles here? Why do we ſo pleaſe our ſelves in our preſent condition, as to be wholly regardleſs of our future? Is not death ſuch a combate as we never enter into but once, and therein are either ſaved, or ſlain eternally? Why do we then make little or no proviſion againſt what we know will, and muſt certainly follow? Do we think that our glory ſhall deſcend after us, and ſcreen us from Gods fiery indignation? Will our riches purchaſe heaven, or bribe hell? Will the firſt-born of our body be accepted for the ſin of our ſoul? What is it that makes our cares and fears ſo prepoſterous, are we anxious for to morrow, and thoughtleſs of Eternity? We fear the *Grave*, and mock at *Hell*, we dread the *Lightning*, and ſlight the *Thunder-bolt*. O methinks ſuch pungent Interrogations ſhould ſtartle the moſt ſecure if they would but put Conſcience upon an anſwer,

and

and not, like *Pilate*, only ask the queſtion, and then go their way. It is mens living by ſenſe, that is that ſtone of ſtumbling upon which they ruine themſelves: Some ſurfet and over-charge themſelves with ſenſual delights, as that their Intellectuals are wholly loſt to all acts of Reaſon; others who have jealouſies concerning their future eſtates, are more willing to venture what the iſſue will be, than undergo an impartial trial; they fear more what ſentence Conſcience will paſs, than the Condemnation that God will inflict. Few there be that put Time and Eternity in the Ballance, and weigh them one againſt the other, or conſider, that life, upon which Eternity depends, is a *vapour*, a *wind*, a *ſpan*, at moſt, which the further it is ſtretched, the more painful it is: And that Eternity is a bottomleſs gulph, which no Line can fathom, no time can reach, no tongue can expreſs. It is a duration alwaies preſent, a being alwaies in being, an everlaſting now; It ſwallows up all revolutions of Ages, as *Pharaohs* lean Kine did eat up the fat, which when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them, but were ſtill as at the beginning. What ſtrange thing can we imagine that in its duration would not be effected? A tear let fall from the damned once in ten thouſand years would fill the earth with far more water than it was covered with in the Deluge. A duſt taken from the Mountains, and uneven parts of the world, would in the like intervals level the Univerſe, and turn it into a Plain, and yet there would be ſtill an Eternity behind. *Never*, *never*, is the killing word that breaks the heart of all theſe hopeleſs Priſoners that lye buried in the flames of Hell. Suppoſitions and poſſibilities which I tremble to think of, if they might be but turned into promiſes unto them of the termination of their anguiſh

guish and torment, O how would their hearts revive within them, and how thankfully would they acknowledge Gods goodness unto them? Do thou therefore, O glorious Lord, who art the Ancient of daies, the Rock of Ages, the Father of Eternity, *teach me to number my daies that I may apply my heart unto true wisdom*, that I may walk in the way of life which is above to the wise, and depart from hell beneath.

Meditation XLIV.

Upon a Physicians feeling the Pulse.

HOw often and how exactly do *Physicians* feel the *Pulse* of their Patients? Not a day passeth without a strict observation of the motions that it makes, according unto which they judge both of the greatness and danger of the distemper, and what the Issues are like to be both in respect of life and death. They do not as other Visitors, ask the Patient how he doth, but inform him rather how he is, and from the report which they make of his malady, his fears and hopes are the more or less. And yet how rarely do they feel their own pulse, who are so seemingly anxious about anothers? Daies, Weeks, Months do Elapse, and pass away without any such studious heeding of themselves, as they continually in their profession Exercise towards others. And yet happily in so doing they are as the Priests in the Temple, who (as our Saviour saith) prophane the Sabbath and are blameless. But they occasion me to think of the practise of many, who cannot so easily be acquitted; Such who are severe observers

servers of other mens waies and actions, and as great neglectors of their own; who are far more glad that they can espy a fault in others, than grieved that it is committed: who presume to look into the breast, and to discover how the Affections, which are the pulse of the soul, do beat and work in every duty. In some they mislike the heat of their Zeal, as too much resembling an high and vehement pulse, whose strength and quickness comes not from *health*, but from a *Feaver*. In others they condemn lukewarmness, an indifferency, whose affections they judge to be as a weak and slow pulse, or as the Spring of a Watch that is wellnigh down, which *Clicks* and moves very faintly. In some again they observe an inequality in their Profession, which is accompanied with frequent stands and pauses that they make; like *Asthmatical* and shortbreathed persons, they run a while and blow longer, before they can move again. And upon these they look with as sad a countenance as a Physician doth upon his Patient that hath a false and intermitting pulse. Few or none can be found to escape their censure, who observe the failings of others, as some ancient *Criticks* did the imperfect Verses of *Homer*, which they learned by heart, not at all regarding the many good. But what can be more contrary to the Law and rule of Christianity than such practises? How many *Prohibitions* are gone out of the Court of Heaven to stay such irregular proceedings? Are we not by Christ forbid to *judge that we be not judged*? To judge nothing before the time untill the Lord come? And yet what if any man could know the true temper of the affections of others, as fully as a Physician can distinguish a well & a sick pulse, would this knowledg be any advantage unto him while he is both ignorant and regardless of his own estate? Would he

he thereby find such joy and comfort in himself, as he that by an impartial examination of himself can discover the truth and sincerity of his own heart to Christ, though he can say nothing of others? Surely this man, as the *hungry*, would be filled with good things, when the other, as the *rich*, should be sent empty away. He, as the humble *Publican*, would be justified, when the other, as the proud *Pharisee*, should be condemned. Let others then, Physician like, study the condition of others, I shall look upon it as my duty, and make it my work, not to find out what others are, but what I am in regard of my unfained love and affection unto Christ, who hath transcendently merited my love, though I am wholly unworthy of his. *Erasistratus* is famed in History for discovering the love of *Antiochus* to his Mother-in-law which shame forced him to conceal, by the motion of his pulse, which he observed to move differently in her presence from what it did at other times. O how happy should I deem my self if I could find the pulse of my affections alwaies working more quick and lively in me whenever I behold my Saviour present in the feast of love, in which he is pleased not only to let me see him, but to enjoy him; or when I hear his name mentioned in a duty, or when I read his name written in his Word, which is therefore the sweeter because his name is so often in it; but I have cause to be ashamed at the uneven temper of my heart, which discovers it self in those intermissions of love and affection that I too often labour under; how often am I chill and cold in the same duty? At what poor trifles do I often stick, when my love to him should blush at the name of difficulty? Can I ever do, or suffer for him too much, whose perfections render him wholly uncapable of being loved too much? If I were melted

melted in the Flames and Ardors of Divine Love, might I not ſay ſtill there are degrees and intentions of heat, which I want, and others have? Chriſtians ſhould be the *rivalls* of *Seraphims*; whoſe Name expreſſeth them to be of a flaming Nature, and whoſe Imployment, in *Iſaiahs* Myſterious Viſion, is to cry one to another *holy, holy, holy Lord God of hoſts*: he is the object to which thoſe Flames that warm them do aſpire and tend. O that my heart, like the Prophets Lips, were touched by ſome *Seraphim*, that I might love Chriſt, which is the beſt of Duties, with an heart flaming with the Fire of Heavenly Love, which is the beſt of tempers.

Meditation XLV.

Upon a Bee-hive and a Waſpes neſt.

THoſe two *inſects* have, as the *Naturaliſts* obſerve, a likeneſs in ſundry Particulars: The *Waſpes* have one common habitation, as well as the *Bees*, and are under the Government of a King; who, as the King of Bees, is the largeſt, and moſt beautifull among them: In the Building of their Cells and Combes they are exact, and make them much like to the Bees both for their *figure* and *ſize*: But they make no *Hony* at all, nor yet any *Wax* that is for ſervice; they live onely upon Rapine, and are injurious to moſt kind of fruits; like Thieves they enter by force into the Hives of Bees and devour the Hony which hath with much induſtry

been

been gathered by them. So eager are they after what is ſweet, as that any narrow-mouthed glaſs ſet neer the Hive with a little ſweet liquor becomes a ſnare to drown and deſtroy them, and a ſecurity to the Bees to prevent their Theft, which paſs the more freely into their Cells, not tempted to endanger their lives, or to neglect their Work by the ſight of ſuch a pleaſing bait. And now whither my thoughts carry me, who cannot eaſily conjecture? is there not a double Polity, or Society of Men, the one of which may juſtly be reſembled to Waſpes, and the other to Bees? It was *Tertullians* ſaying long ſince, *Faciunt favos & veſpæ, faciunt Eccleſiæ Marcionitæ:* Waſpes make Combes, but they are empty ones; and ſo Hereticks make Churches, but they are void of Truth, which is that ſweet Hony that is to be found onely amongſt the Aſſemblies of the Faithfull. What elſe is the Church of *Rome*, notwithſtanding all thoſe pretences which it makes of being a *Mother-Hive*, but a Neaſt of Angry Waſpes, under the Rule and Sway of a Spiritual *Abaddon:* how many ſwarmes have gone out from thence, not to make Hony, but to deſtroy what others have made? frauds, robberies, violence have been the things which they have practiſed, and with which their habitations have been filled; have they not thruſt their Stings deep into thouſands, who have detected their Impoſtures, and have endeavoured to hold the Myſtery of the Faith in a pure Conſcience? Have they not waſted many places, which were like the Garden of the *Spouſe*, full of precious fruits, into which her *Beloved* might come, and eat of his hony and hony-combe? who can expreſs the rage and ſcorn with which they have trampled upon thoſe, that durſt not abett their impieties? how fond and fruitleſs then muſt the attempts of thoſe be, who

who, as if they had forgotten what *Amalek* had done are ſetting on foot overtures of Peace, and termes of Accommodation between *Proteſtancy* and *Popery*? as if the diſtances between the one and the other were more ſeeming than reall, and might as readily be brought together as the two extreames of a Serpent, who can, when he pleaſeth, caſt himſelf into a Circle, and take his Tail into his Mouth? But who knoweth not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump; and ſo will a little Error diffuſe its poyſon through the whole body of truth, like a drop of oyl on Cloath, it no ſooner falls then ſpreads; like a ſpark on Tinder it catcheth, and runs at once. And therefore *Paul* would not for one hour give place unto falſe Brethren, leaſt the Truth of the Goſpel might be endangered. To do it then with the leaſt prejudice to Truth is ſinfull; and to effect it without it is impoſſible. Sooner may they reconcile *Antipathies* in Nature, than in Religion; When therefore they have combined Fire and Water, without extinction of each other, and made an amity between the *Dove* and the *Hawk*, between the *Waſpe* and the *Bee*; So that the one ſhall not infeſt the other, then may they promiſe themſelves ſucceſs, in making up the breaches between *Babylon* and *Zion*. But O that they who are ſo ſtudious to make ſtrife to ceaſe between the *Philiſtines* and the *Iſraelites*, would bend their Mindes to heal the Diviſions of *Iſrael*, among whom there are great thoughts and ſearchings of heart. Is it not pity to ſee the Induſtrious Bees, whoſe Labours are ſo uſefull to their owner, to make a War in the Mouth of their Hive, and to kill one another by thoſe Stings with which they ſhould defend their Cells againſt Waſpes and Drones? and is it not then a ſad ſpectacle to behold Chriſtians who ſhould be

joyned

joyned together, *fidei vinculo, glutine Charitatis*; by the Bond and Cement of Faith and Love, to be divided one from another, and in Animosities to draw the Sword, and to sheath it also in the Bowells of each other? And yet such heats there have sometimes been, and still are between Brethren. I could methinks give way to my Sorrow, and let it overflow the Bankes, to see Professors to be less tender of Christs Body, than the Souldiers were of his Coat; and few or none to prize that Unity which is the Glory of the Faith of the Gospel. Have we not all one Father, God blessed for ever? have we not all one Elder Brother, Jesus Christ, who is the First-Borne of every Creature? are we not all quickened by one Spirit, who is a Spirit of Love? are we not all under one Solemne Vow of Baptisme, in which we have dedicated our selves to Gods Service as his Souldiers? how can we then turn Enemies one to another? O God do thou, who hast made that blessed Promise of giving thy People one Heart, and one Way, put into them a Spirit of *Wisdome* and *Love*, that they may walk Wisely to those that are Without, and Lovingly one towards another; that by this all Men may know that they are Christs Disciples, and believe that thou hast sent him.

Meditation

Meditation XLVI.

Upon Contentment and Satisfaction.

IT is our Saviours Maxim, that *Mans life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth.* If there be any happiness upon Earth, it is in that we call *Contentation*, which cometh from the *Minde within*, and not from *the things without.* Perfect *Satisfaction* is to be had onely in Heaven, where we shall be happy, not by the *Confinement*, but by the *Fruition* of our desires: Then (saith *David*) *I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness.* How happy therefore is every Godly Mans Condition, who are the onely Persons that are instructed in the Mystery of Contentment while they live on Earth, and shall be in Heaven the sole Possessors of perfect and everlasting Blessedness? True it is, that *Philosophy* hath greatly prized, and earnestly sought this Rich Jewell of Contentation; but *Christianity* hath onely found it. The *Moralists* have exercised their Wits in giving of Rules to attain it, and have let fall some Sentences that may deserve to be put in the Christians *Register*, but they could never look into the true Grounds from whence sound Contentment doth arise, and upon which it is to be built. The highest of their *Precepts* have not (as I may say) the root of the Matter in them, and are therefore insufficient wholly to compose the Minde, to such a Calme and Even Temper, as may, in the variety of Changes, shew and discover its self to be so reconciled to its present Con-

dition, as not to loſe its Inward Peace and Serenity, whatſoever the Stormes and Croſs Accidents are from without. What are the Conſiderations which they preſcribe as a ſupport againſt Poverty, Sickneſs, Impriſonment, loſs of Friends, Baniſhment, and ſuch like Evils? are they not Perſwaſions drawn from the Dignity of *Man*, from the vanity and uncertainty of all *outward things*; from the ſhortneſs and frailty of *Life*, from the befalling of the ſame things unto others? But alaſs! what ſlender Props are theſe to bear the ſtreſs and weight of thoſe Armies of Trialls, which at once may aſſault the Life of Man. Theſe may haply ſerve as ſecondary helpes to alleviate the bitterneſs of ſome Afflictions, when we are apt to think them greater than what others have felt, or longer than what others have endured: But to keep the Minde in Peace in the midſt of all æſtuations from without, there muſt be more Effectual Remedies than either *Nature* or *Morality* can ſuggeſt. From whence then can true Contentment ariſe but from *Godlineſs*, which hath a *Sufficiency* to eſtabliſh the Heart? it is that alone which bringeth a Man home to God, out of whom neither Contentment, nor Satisfaction can ever be had. It is that which acquainteth a Man with that great Secret, of Gods *Speciall Providence* over his Children, who Rules the World, not onely as a Lord, to make them ſenſible of his *Power*, but as a loving Father to make them confident of his *goodneſs*, whereby he diſpoſeth all things for the beſt. O when Faith hath once apprehended this, how firmly can it reſt upon the Promiſes which are made to Godlineſs, both of this life and that which is to come? How can it work far more Contentation with the

the meaneſt *Food*, than others have with the coſtlieſt *Delicates*; with the pooreſt *Raiment*, than others have with their richeſt *Ornaments*? It is Faith onely that teacheth a Chriſtian like a skilfull *Muſician*, to let down a String a Peg lower, when the Tune requires it; or like an experienced *Spagirick* to remit, or intend his Furnace as occaſion ſerves. Such an one was *Paul*, who learned this heavenly Art, not at *Gamaliels feet*, but in *Chriſts School*, the Holy Spirit of God being his Teacher, ſo that he knew both how to want and how to abound, and in whatſoever State he was therewith to be content. Let none then ſo far admire thoſe Heathen Sages in thoſe ſpeculations of theirs concerning this Myſtery, as if they had attained to hit that Mark at which they levelled, and had arrived at the utmoſt boundaries of it. Whereas in all their Eſſayes, they have fallen as far ſhort of true Contentation, as Sick Mens *Slumbrings* and Dreams, do of a ſound and healthfull reſt. Of all their *Precepts* and *Rules* I may ſay as *Eraſmus* did of *Seneca*, in an Epiſtle of his, *Si legas eum ut paganum, ſcripſit Chriſtianè ſi ut Chriſtianum, ſcripſit paganicè*: If you read them as the Sayings of Heathens, they ſpeak Chriſtianly; but if you look upon them as the Sayings of Chriſtians, they ſpeak Paganly. And how could it be that they ſhould ever do otherwiſe? they being wholly deſtitute of the *Light of Grace*, and the *Guidance of the Spirit*, which are both requiſite to this high and holy Learning? the one as a *Principle*, and the other as a *Teacher*. But yet this I muſt ſay alſo, that they have done enough to ſhame many, who, enjoying the Benefit of *Divine Revelation*, and living in the open Sun-ſhine of the Goſpel, have profited thereby in ſo ſmall a Proportion

beyond them. Who can forbear blushing to see those who Profess to be Christians, to live so contrary to the Law and Rule which they should walk by? to seek contentment, not by *moderating their desires*, but by *satisfying* them, which will still *encrease*, as things *come on:* like to Rivers, which the more they are fed, and the further they run, the wider they spread. Can it rationally be deemed by any, that those things which are *Summes* in the *desire*, and *Cyphers* in the *fruition*, should ever effect contentedness in the minde? Is not the deficiency that Men see in their abundance the ground of their Multiplying it? and can they ever, by the Additions which they make, heal its deficiency? why then should any try and attempt such fruitless projects, which cannot but end in disappointment? Methinks I should not need to expostulate the matter with Christians: That anointing which teacheth them all things, should instruct them in this, that Godliness is the onely way to *Contentment* in this life, and *satisfaction* in the other. But Lord, however others live, help me to bring my Minde to my Condition, which is as well my duty as my happiness while I am on earth; and to rest assured that in heaven thou wilt bring my Estate to my Minde, which is that I may enjoy thee in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Meditation

Meditation XLVII.

Vpon the Perching of a piece of Cloth.

LAwes, ſignally good, oft times derive their birth according to the common Saying, from evil Manners, ſpringing like fair and beautifull Flowers from a black and deformed Root: And ſo likewiſe the many and ingenuous Explorations of finding out the difference between things of worth and their Counterfeits; and of ſeeing into the particular defects of Commodities, have been occaſioned from the multiplicity of deceits, which have riſen either from natural ſemblances, or corrupt Practiſes. The skilfull *Lapidary* hath, by his obſervation, learned to know a falſe *Stone* from a true, which the common Eye cannot diſtinguiſh. The *Herbaliſts* do difference *Plants* ſometimes by the Root, ſometimes by the Taſte, when the likeneſs of the Leaf is perfectly the ſame. The *Cautious* Receiver, that he be not couzened by adulterated *Coyne* for *true*, makes an *Artificial Touchſtone* of his Senſes, he *bends* it, he *rings* it, he *rubs* it, and *ſmells* to it, that thereby he may finde out what it is: The circumſpect *Merchant* contents not himſelf with the ſeeing and feeling of his *Cloth* as it lies made up; but he puts it upon the *Perch*, and ſetting it between the light and himſelf drawes it leaſurely over; and ſo diſcovers not onely the rents and holes that are in it, but the inequality of the threads, the unevenneſs of its ſpinning, the ſpots and ſtaines that are in it, and what not? that may make it either to be rejected for its defects, or approved

for its goodneſs. O how impartial a Judge is light, which neither flatters friends, nor wrongs enemies; which manifeſts the good as well as the evil to what ever it is applyed? This kinde of triall hints to me the beſt manner of doing that work, which every Chriſtian ought to perform with the greateſt care, the ſearching and examining of his own wayes. I may learn from what is done to the Cloth, to do the ſame Spiritually to my ſelf, by ſetting my actions between the light of the Word, and the Diſcerning power of Conſcience, that ſo the one may diſcover, and the other may judge what their rectitude or pravity is? and this is beſt done when every parcel of the Converſation is looked into, and ſcanned, as the Cloth that is drawn over the Perch; then it is that I find the unevenneſs of my Duties, the diſtractions of my Thoughts, and the unbelief of my Heart, which runs as a continued Thread from one end of the Duty unto the other. Then it is that I eſpy thoſe ſecret ſtaines of Hypocriſie which diſcolour my ſervices, and blemiſh them to God, when they ſeem fair to the eye of Man; Then it is that convinced of my filthineſs, I cry out, My *Perſon* wants a *Prieſt*, which is deformed with infinite *guilt*, that without him cannot be covered. My *nature* wants a *Prieſt*, which is over-run with an univerſal *leproſie*, that without him cannot be cured. My *Sins* want a *Prieſt*, which are for their number as the ſands, and for their greatneſs as the Mountains, that without him can never be pardoned. My *holy things* want a *Prieſt*, which are defiled with the daily Eruptions of ſin and folly, that without him can never be accepted. And who is it that thus vieweth himſelf by this perfect Law of Liberty, that is not thus affected? What ſaith *Paul* of himſelf? *I was alive without the Law once, but when the Commandment came ſin revived*

revived, and I died: who was once more full of conceired abilities to perform the Righteousnes of the Law without blame? Who was more presumptuous in self-Justifications, and elated thoughts of his Perfection, than the *Apostle*, while he was without the Law? that is, not without the *Letter*, but without the *Spirituall sense* and penetrative power of it; but when the Commandment came in its Vigour and Life, how suddenly did all those mis-perswasions of his own Righteousnes vanish into nothing? He then lost his confidence of being Saved by his obedience to the Law; and by the light of it discovered those inward Lustings, and desires to be sinfull, and such as subjected him unto Death, which before were wholly neglected and unseen. As I would therefore incite Christians to an Exact discussion of their wayes, so would I also direct them to look upon them through no other *medium* then the Light of the Word: *Wherewith* (saith *David*) *shall a young Man cleanse his wayes*, (or as the Original imports, make clear as Christal) *by taking heed thereto according to thy Word?* The Heathen were not altogether Aliens to this Duty of Self-Examination; it was *Sextius* his custome, as *Seneca* reports it, when he betook himself to his Nights Rest, to question his Soul, *Quod hodie malum tuum sanasti? cui vitio obstetisti?* What Malady hast thou this day cured? What vice hast thou withstood? It was also *Pythagoras* his counsel to his Scholars, that each Man should demand of himself, *Wherein have I offended? What good have I done?* But alas! how confused and in-distinct was that light by which they made this search? How little can the Candle-light of Nature discover of the evil of Sin, whose Rules and Principles do so much fall in, and sute with the wills of the Flesh? What *Camell Sins* did

the very best of them swallow down, without the least straining at them? What swarmes are there of sins, which Christians complain of, that the Natural Man is totally ignorant of, and can no more discover, without the aid of the Word, than the Eye can discern its own Blood-shed without the help of a Glass? We have *Pauls* own confession in this particular, *I had not known lust, except the Law had said, thou shalt not covet.* Before he onely saw some sins that were as *beames* for their magnitude, but now he is sensible of the smallest *motes.* To the Law then, and to the Testimony do you betake your selves, O ye sincere and upright ones, when you go about this Work! I fear not its Purity, but love it; shrink not at its Searching Power, but yield up your selves to a free and voluntary admission of its light; yea rejoyce and be exceeding glad, that by the Light of the Word, ye can trace sin home unto its receptacle, and can both judge it and mortifie it in the seed and root of it, which is the surest and best Way of destroying it. He is amongst the First-borne of Christians, who communes most with his own heart, and looks oftenest into the Books of Conscience, which Writes *Journalls*, and not *Annalls*, and is most likely to obtain a double Portion both of *Peace* and *Grace*; but when he hath done all, let him make *Davids* Prayer the close; *Search me, O Lord, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

Meditation

Meditation XLVIII.

Vpon the ſight of a Grave newly made.

IT is happily no pleaſing ſight, but queſtionleſs very profitable, to look ſomtimes into *the houſe appointed for all living*, as holy *Job* calls the *Grave*. Though nothing leſs than beauty can be ſeen which may delight the *Eye*, yet much may be beheld that may paſſionately affect the *heart*. The thoughts which it ſuggeſted to me were like unto the *Cloud* that was between the Camp of the *Egyptians* and the Camp of *Iſrael*, which had both a dark and bright ſide: The one caſts down, and the other raiſeth up, but both are uſeful. My *dark* and *ſad* thoughts ſprang from the conſideration of the *entry* of death, which came into the world by ſin; it is ſin that hath made all the *Funerals* that ever have been. In our Creation, death had neither *matter* in us, nor *right* over us: Our Innocency was free of any *neceſſity* of death. As God made us living Creatures, ſo his power was able to ſuſtain us *immortal* creatures; we had bodily life by our ſoul in our body, and ſpiritual life by Gods Image in both, but ſin brought on us death of all ſorts: Death *ſpiritual*, in the loſs of Gods Image, death *bodily* in the begun corruption of our body, and death *eternal* in the endleſs ruine of both. And whom would not this ſingle thought afflict with dread and ſorrow to ſee what a change ſin hath made in the condition of man? If *Adam* would have lived without ſin, he might have lived without end: But now by his credulous receiving the Serpents Poyſon, *Death* is glued to our nature,

neceſſity

necessity of evil to the *freedom* of our *will*, and all *misery* to *our selves*. Another dark and posing thought did arise from the *progress* of death, which keeps no order or method. It thrusts its sickle not only into the ripe *corn*, but the green *blade*; it nips the *blossom*, as well as gathers the *fruit*; it dissolves the knot that was but new made between the soul and the body, as well as that which age and years had confirmed. There were I observed *skulls* of all *Sizes*: There were some who had never seen the Sun to pass from one *Tropick* to the other: Others there were whose life could not be reckoned by *daies*, or *hours*, but by *minutes*; they dropt only from the *Womb* to the *Grave*. And is not this amongst the secrets of God, that thousands should thus pass through the world, and be determined to different Estates for Eternity? What can I say? But that *the waies of God are unsearchable, and his Judgments past finding out*. As it now shews his Soveraignty, thus to deal with his Creatures as it pleaseth him; so the Great Day will manifest the Wisdom and Justice of God that is wrapt up in these mysterious providences. He that is the Judge of all, will be found to be righteous towards all. A third sad thought, *The consuming power of the grave* did stir up within me, so that I was ready to say, *Can these dry bones live?* Can these mingled dusts be distinguished? Can the dusts that are scattered into distances be ever united? Doth not the *Noble* and the *Base*, the *Saint*, and the *Sinner* lye equally under the power of corruption? Who then would not dread to descend into the Grave, and make *Hemans* question, *Will God shew wonders to the dead, shall the dead arise and praise him?* But when I consider, that Believers in their ascending into heaven, do only let fall their bodies to the earth, as *Elijah* dropt his Mantle, when he

was

was taken up, and that their Spirits return to God that gave them. That Death striketh not on the *New man*, but on the *Tabernacle* which is a common Lodging both to Flesh and Spirit, my fears are greatly Alleviated, for who is much solicitous for the Cabinet when the Jewel is safe. Yea, when I think that death, which separates our persons from the world, our soul from the body, and every part of our body from another, cannot dissolve our Union with Christ; but that then we sleep in him, and shall be raised by him, and conformed to him, as the pattern of our glory. O how do these most radiant thoughts dispell both the *black fears* of death, and the *lightsome comforts* of the world, as the rising Sun makes the bright stars of heaven to vanish, as well as the dark *shades* of the night? How little then doth the love of this life, or the difficulties of death abate the desires of a Believer, *to be dissolved and to be with Christ, which is far better*? Who can wonder at old *Simeons* importunity to depart in peace, when his eyes had seen the Salvation of God, and his arms embraced it? Who would not be of the same mind that hath once tasted of the Clusters of the heavenly *Canaan* to long after the full Vintage? How pathetical is that of *Austin* upon Gods answer to *Moses*, *Thou canst not see my face, for no man can see me and live.* Who replies with great confidence, Lord, is that all that I cannot see thy face and live? *Eja Domine, moriar, ut te videam; videam, ut hic moriar, nolo vivere, volo mori, dissolvi cupio, & esse cum Christo. I pray thee Lord then let me dye, that I may see thy face: Or let me see thee that I may dye in this place. I would not live, I would dye. I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ.* Thus also have other Saints been affected, who have had death in desire, and life in patience. O

what

what a ſtrange change then hath Chriſt made in *death* and the *grave*, and his grace in the *heart* and affections of Believers? Death, which ſin brought into the world, is now become the only means to deſtroy and kill ſin. Death, which is only contrary unto life, is now turned into a *Port* and paſſage into life: So that when we paſs out of this life we loſe neither life nor being, but are admitted to a more glorious life and being than ever we had. Death, that before was an armed *Enemy*, is now made a reconciled and firm *friend*, a *Phyſician* to cure all our diſeaſes, and an *Harbinger* to make way for glory. The Grave alſo by Chriſts lying in it, is become a *bed of reſt*, in which his Saints fetch a ſhort *ſlumber* untill he awaken them to a glorious Reſurrection. It is the Chamber into which he invites his beloved ones, to hide themſelves untill his indignation be paſt; the *Arke*, into which he ſhuts his *Noahs* whileſt he deſtroyes the world with an overflowing deluge of his wrath and diſpleaſure. And therefore it is, that by his grace they are not afraid to meet Death, which others would ſhun, and make it as a voluntary *offering* unto God, which others pay only as a *neceſſary debt*. Yea, they eſteem it as one of the choiceſt Jewels in that exact *Inventory*, that *Paul* hath made of the riches of Believers, and next unto Jeſus Chriſt, bleſs God for it, as the greateſt mercy. O holy Saviour, do thou then who art the Lord both of the dead and of the living, unto whom all ought to live, and all ought to dye, enable me thy ſervant to love *thee* above life, which of all bleſſings is the *ſweeteſt*, and to hate *ſin* above death, which of all evils is the *bitteреſt* to nature: that ſo I may have this teſtimony of the power of thy grace in the change of my heart, that for the enjoyment of perfect Communion with thee I can gladly loſe my life,

life, and be ſeparated from ſin, can willingly undergo death, which is of all evidences the Cleareſt.

Meditation XLIX.

Vpon a Spring in an high ground.

THe additional bleſſing, which *Achſah* ſought of *Caleb* her Father was Springs of water for her ſouth or dry land, who gave her the upper and the nether Springs: If the diſtinct recording of this particular in Scripture carry any thing of importance with it, is it not that he gave her ſome portion of Land that was well watered, as the low valleys for the moſt part are? And that he gave alſo ſuch Springs that by their high lying were apt to convey their ſtream to the enriching of other parts that ſtood in need of ſuch helps to make them fruitful. Now, what is it that can more commend a Spring, than a free diffuſion of its waters, and the ſpreading of its moiſture, not only to grounds that are near, but to ſuch as are at a diſtance from it, and what can more conduce unto this commodious uſefulneſs than the Springs *riſe* from ſome hill, or place of aſcent? *Another Spring* may haply ſerve to water ſome little ſpot of ground, to benefit ſome private Garden, but an *upper Spring* will greatly advantage a large *Inheritance.* Such a like difference methinks there is in the *moral* Well-ſprings of grace and holineſs, as is between the *natural*, according to the diverſity of ſubjects in which they are ſeated. *Grace* in a poor man is as a *nether ſpring*, which is not leſs uſeful through a defect of water, but through an incapacity to make any large

large communication of it, in regard of those circumstances in which he stands: His *wants*, his *paucity* of Friends, the *little notice* the world takes of him, the *slightings* that Poverty exposeth most men unto, are all great obstacles to the *eternal* diffusions of his grace, though not to his *intrinsecal* fulness of it. But grace in a great Person is like an *upper Spring*, which may convey it self far and near, because of the many advantages which he hath above others: His Counsels will be sooner harkened unto, his Reproofs will over-awe more, his Conversation will win more, his Example having the force of a Law. So willing have many been to make Greatness their pattern, as that they have imitated their infirmities. *Dyonisius* his Courtiers affected to seem to be purblind, and justle one against another, that so they might be like their Prince. *Alexanders* Followers would imitate him in their gesture, and go as if their shoulders were one higher than the other, because there was some inequality in his. Among the *Persians* they were wont highly to esteem a long and narrow head, and were industrious to fashion the heads of their new-born Infants to such a shape, because some of their Kings heads were of that figure. O what pity is it then that greatness and goodness should be ever out of Conjunction together, or be as Stars of a different Hemispheer, that are never seen shining at the same time? Yea, why should not those who are the highest among men affect also to be the best, that so they might bring a beauty and shine into the world, that they might allure others not only to behold it, but also to imitate it, by conforming themselves to their happy example? It is the saying of *Plutarch*, that rare Moralist, That God is angry with them that counterfeit his Thunder and

Lightning;

Lightning; his Scepter, and his Trident, and his Thunderbolts he would not have any to meddle with: He loves not that any ſhould imitate him in abſolute Dominion and Soveraignty: But he delights to ſee them darting forth thoſe amiable and cheriſhing beams of Juſtice, Goodneſs, and Clemency. Without theſe things be conveyed down unto others by thoſe who have the reines of Power and Government in their hands, though they look upon themſelves as Gods on earth, yet they are as unlike to the God of heaven as a blazing *Comet* is to a bright and glorious Sun, or a deceitful *Glow-worm* to an heavenly *Star*. What low thoughts *Solomon* himſelf hath of Soveraignty when put into an ill hand, we may read in his Book of the *Preacher*, where he tells us, that *better is a poor and a wiſe Child, than an old and fooliſh King who will not be inſtructed*, to manage his power and authority for the good of thoſe that are under him. It is wiſdom that makes a mans face to ſhine, but moſt of all thoſe that are in higheſt places: Good in them is moſt conſpicuous, and both more applauded and Imitated than in others. What evil cannot a King forbid, *whoſe wrath is as the roaring of a Lion*? What good can he not encourage, *whoſe favour is as a cloud of the latter rain*, which promiſeth an harveſt of bleſſings? I cannot but wonder at the great changes which the Scripture reports to have been made by godly Princes, in the midſt of a general Apoſtacy, ſuch as *Aſa*, *Jehoſhaphat*, *Ezekiah*, *Joſiah* who purged the Land from a ſpreading Idolatry, and reſtored Sabbaths, Ordinances, and Temple-worſhip to their power and purity, who have bowed the hearts of the people towards them, like to the top of a fiſhers Angling rod, this way or that way as it pleaſeth them. Who but Princes that had grace in their hearts, and

and power in their hands, could have ever effected such things as might well seem to be of insuperable difficulty? O that I could therefore suggest such Considerations that might prevail with all whose conditions God hath raised above others, to be accordingly instrumental in the doing of good to others that move in a lower spheer. Shall I say, God expects it from you? If I do, it is no other than what himself hath spoken, when he saith, *He will get him up to the great men, for they have known the way of the Lord, and the Judgement of their God.* Or shall I say, God signally commands it from you above others? Is it not to you that he particularly calls? *Be wise now O ye Kings, be instructed, ye Judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling, kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way.* Do you think, that greatness doth rather exempt from, than oblige to obedience, or that you shall have a more favourable Audit at the last Day, when every man must give an account of himself unto God? Be not deceived, God will enquire what you have done more for him above others, as he hath for you above thousands, and woe be unto you if you be found too light. Your Exaltation in this life will serve only to make your casting down to be the more dismal in the other, and to confirm the truth of that Proverb, *Inferni pavimentum sit ex magnatum galeis, Sacerdotum capitibus*; That Hell is paved with the Corslets of Noblemen, and the skulls of Priests.

Medita-

Meditation L.

Upon the vanity of Wishes.

TRue and perfect happiness is a good which neither the light of Nature can discover, nor its endeavours obtain; it being as impotent to the acquiring of it, as it is blind to the beholding of it. And yet there is nothing in which man less apprehends himself at a loss, than in this, of fully contriving at least, if not effecting his own happiness. Who is it that is not confident, that if he might have the liberty of his options to wish whatever he would, and to have them turned into realities for him; but that he could readily frame to himself a condition as full of happiness, as the Sun is of light, or the Sea of water? What poor and contemptible thoughts would he have of all that glory of the world which the devil shewed to Christ as a bait, when he tempted him to the worst of sins, to those stately Schemes and representations, which he could suppose to be the objects of his delight? If wishes were the measure of happiness, what is it that the boundless imagination of man would not suppose and desire? What strange changes would he forthwith make in the Universe, in levelling of Mountains, in raising of Vallies, in altering of Climates and Elements themselves? Happily he might wish that the Sea were turned into a delicious bath, in which he might sport himself without any fear of drowning; that the Rocks were as so many polished Diamonds, the Sands as so many fair Pearls to beautifie it, and the

Iſlands as ſo many retiring houſes of pleaſure to betake himſelf unto when he pleaſeth. He might wiſh that all the Trees of the earth were as the choiceſt plants of Paradiſe, every one of which might at his beck bow down their branches, and tender their ripe fruit unto him. And thus may he multiply his wiſhes, until every ſpire of Graſs, and every duſt of the earth have undergone ſome remarkable mutation according to the luſt of his fancy, and yet be as far from any ſatisfaction in his deſires, or reſt in his thoughts, as the Apes in the Fable were from warmth, which finding a Glow-worm in a cold night, gathered ſome ſticks together, and blew themſelves breathleſs to kindle a little fire. For all theſe ſuppoſed gaieties, are not the *perfection* but the *diſeaſe* of fancy, which hath (as I may ſo ſpeak) a *Boulimia*, in reſpect of objects, as ſome corrupt and vitiated appetites have in reſpect of meats, who though they eat much are yet never ſatisfied. And hence it is, that men who enjoy plenty, and are far from having any juſt cauſe to complain of want, do yet, as unſatisfied perſons, feed themſelves with fond ſuppoſitions of being in ſuch an eſtate and condition of which they can have no poſſibility, much leſs any real hope for to obtain. The ambitious man pleaſeth himſelf in thinking how bravely he could King it, if he were but ſet upon a Throne, and how far he would out-ſtrip all other Princes that have been before him both for ſtate and glory; he fancies what pleaſures he would have for his recreation, what meats for his Table, what perſons for his attendants, what Laws for his Government, and then, *Abſolom* like, he wiſheth in himſelf, *O that I were made a Judge in Iſrael.* The covetous perſon, whoſe heart is ſet upon Riches, never ceaſeth in the midſt of his abundance to deſire more,

more. *Riches* and his *deſires* ſtill keep at a diſtance; as they come on, ſo do his deſires come on too, the one can never overtake the other, no more than the hinder wheels of a Coach can overtake the former. If he ſhould, as *Peter*, caſt his hook into the Sea, and take up the fiſh that firſt cometh up, with a Stater or piece of money in his mouth, how eagerly ſtraitwaies would he wiſh to take a ſecond, and then a third, yea, how would he ſtill renew his wiſhes, ſo as ſooner to empty the Sea of all its fiſh, than to ſatisfie his deſires with accumulated treaſures. But are theſe, O vain man, the higheſt wiſhes with which you would impe your preſent enjoyments, and ſo make your ſpeedy flight unto perfect happineſs? What if all theſe ſuppoſitions and wiſhes, which are (as I may ſo ſpeak) the creations of fancy, were real exiſtency? Yea, what if your condition did as far exceed the pomp of all humane Imagination, as *Solomon* did the fame that was ſpread abroad of him? Might I not yet ſay, as *David* did, *O ye Sons of men, how long will ye love vanity, and ſeek after leaſing?* Are theſe things for which Angels will give you the right hand of fellowſhip? Or will this glory make them ſtoop to become miniſtring ſpirits unto you? Though you may conceive as highly of your ſelves, as the Prince of *Tyrus* did of himſelf, who ſaid *he was a God*, and ſate in the ſeat of God, yet they will look upon you no better than gilded duſt and aſhes. That which they adore, and with wonder look into, is not the happineſs of the *worldlings*, but of *believers*, who are bleſſed, not according to what they ask or deſire, but far above whatever could have entred into the thoughts of men and Angels to conceive. Who could ever have ſaid to God, as *Haman* did to *Ahaſuerus*, if he had been asked, *What ſhall be done to*

the man whom God delighteth to honour? Let the foundation and corner stone of his happiness be laid in the exinanition of the Son of God, let him come from heaven to earth to purchase it with his bloud: let his nature be dignified by being personally united unto the Divine Nature, let him be a co-heir with him who is the brightness of his Fathers glory, sit with him upon the same Throne, and be conformed to his likeness: let him stand for ever in the highest and sweetest relations unto the three most glorious Persons, having God to be his *Father*, his Son to be his *Elder Brother*, and the Holy Spirit to be his *Friend* and *Comforter*, are not these things such, as may pose Angels to tell whether is greater the *wonder* or the *mercy*? May it not be truly said, that Omnipotency it self is exhausted, so that there remains neither power in God to do, nor wisdom to find out a greater happiness than this, which he hath vouchsafed to man in his lowest condition? Can there then be any additions made by the narrow conceptions of weak Creatures? Let me therefore expostulate with Christians, whose happiness in Christ is compleat, and yet, as if there were an emptiness in their condition, are still hankering in their minds after the worlds vanities, and wishing, like carnal *Israelites*, to eat of the Flesh-pots and Garlick of *Egypt*, as if the true bread from heaven were not a sufficient and satisfying food. Is there any thing in the world which you cannot find made up to you in Christ? Are not all the scattered comforts which can be had only in the Creatures by retaile, as being parcelled out some to one and some to another, to be had fully in Christ, in whom they are summed up, as broken particulars are in the foot of an account? Though he be, *Bonum formaliter simplex*, a good formally simple, yet he is,

Eminenter,

Eminenter multiplex. A good eminently manifold. And there is more to be had in Chriſt, than can be had any waies out of him; who, as the firſt figure in a number, ſtands for more than all the figures that can be added unto it. *Whom,* ſaith holy *David, have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I deſire beſides thee.* Surely, if Heaven, which hath legions of beauties and perfections in it, yield nothing worthy of his love and affection but God and Chriſt, we may well conclude, that Earth, which is as void of good, as Heaven is full, can have nothing in it that is to be deſired by us. Why then ſhould any, in whom Chriſt is the hope of glory, be as the men of the world, who cry out, *Who will ſhew us any good?* For them to be unſatisfied who feed upon vanities is no wonder; but for thoſe who poſſeſs him that is, and hath all things, it is ſtrange that they ſhould ſeek any thing out of him. *Quid ultra quærit, cui omnia ſunt conditor ſui? aut quid ei ſufficit, cui ipſe non ſufficit?* What can he ſeek further (ſaith *Proſper*) to whom his God is made every thing? Or what will ſuffice him, to whom He is not ſufficient? I know but one wiſh that any Believer hath to make, and that is the wiſh of St. *John,* with which he ſeals up the Book of God, as the common deſire of all the Faithful, with which I ſhall ſhut up this Meditation, as with the beſt of wiſhes: *Come Lord Jeſus,* even ſo come, as thou haſt promiſed, *come quickly,* in whoſe preſence there is fulneſs of joy, and at whoſe right hand are pleaſures for evermore.

Meditation LI.

Upon first Fruits and Gleanings.

WHat the Apoſtle ſaith of the heavenly Bodies, that one *Star* differeth from another Star in glory, is true alſo of the heavenly *Laws* and Commands of God, as well *Ceremonial* as *Moral*, that they differ from each other in their *weight* and *worth*. Some of which ſet forth the *greater* things, and others the *leſs*; as may be eaſily ſeen in this double Command of *Firſt* fruits, and Gleanings; one of which is far greater than the other, though the leſs is not to be neglected, becauſe it is a ſtream that flows from the ſame Fountain, the Soveraign will and appointment of God. But that we may the better take the Dimenſions of this Law of *Firſt fruits*, let us view it by the help of ſome Conſiderations, as Aſtronomers by inſtruments judge of the Altitude, and Magnitude of a Star. We may firſt ſee it in the extent of thoſe things in the offering of which God would be honoured and acknowledged; he required *the firſtlings of Men and Cattel, the firſt fruits of trees, and of the Earth, in the ſheaf, and in the threſhing floor, in the dough, and in the loaves.* It did reach to all their Subſtance, and the encreaſe, which without this Service was but a polluted and an unclean heap.

Secondly, In the ſolemn manner of the offering of them unto God, which was to be done with an humble Confeſſion of their Fathers poverty; *A Syrian ready to periſh was my Father*, and of the hard bondage in

in *Egypt* sustained by them, and with acknowledgment of Gods gracious looking upon their Affliction, Labour, and Oppression, bringing them also forth with a mighty hand and out-stretched arm, with great terribleness, and with signs and wonders, and giving them a Land that floweth with milk and honey.

Thirdly, In the express command for the speedy payment of them, they were not to be *delayed*, much less *withheld*; to keep them back was *robbery*, to defer them was *disobedience*, and rendred them rather to be of the *Gleanings* and *Corners of the field*, which God had appointed to be reserved for the poor; then of the *First fruits* which he required for himself. It was an injury to the *moral* duty which they did teach of Consecrating to God the first and prime of their years, and abilities, which is to him far more acceptable than all Offerings and Sacrifices whatever; for how could it be, that he who was careless of the *Rite* and *Ceremony*, which typified his duty to him, should ever be mindful of doing that which was the marrow and substance of it. And now when I think that *First fruits* only were the *shadow* of our early honouring God, and remembring him in the day of our youth, when all the faculties both of soul and body are in their vigour and strength. I cannot but wonder, as well as mourn, to see that under the Doctrine of the Gospel, which teacheth men to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, that thereby they might become a kind of *first fruits unto God and the Lamb*. So few make Religion the work of the morning of their Age, and so many of the Evening. What else is this, but to give the *First fruits* to Satan, and the *Gleanings* to God; To him the finest of the *flower*, and to God the *bran*? But tell me, O ye deferrers of holiness, who make it

both the least and the last work of your lives. Is it only necessary to die to God, and not to live to him? Or is it reasonable to say as that young man did to his Companion, when he saw *Ambrose* dying, *Tecum viverem & cum Ambrosio moriar*, I would live with thee, and dye with *Ambrose*? Is not this to mock God, whom yet you would have to save you? And to minister matter of triumph to the God of this world, whose Captives you have been, that though the God of heaven pay you your wages, yet you have done wholly his work? Unto you therefore, O men, I call, and my voice is unto the Sons of men, be not deceived, God will not be mocked: It is not the owning of him when you can serve neither your selves, nor your Lusts any longer, that will be acceptable unto him: It is not a few bedrid prayers, that are as those Ears of Corn which *Pharaoh* saw in his dream, withered, thin, and blasted with the East wind, that will expiate those black Crimes with which your ill-spent life is overspread. Can an Offering of *Gleanings*, which is made up of *robbery*, and *disobedience*, of wronging the poor, and violating the Command of God, ever hallow the whole Harvest? No more can such duties be availing to reconcile you to God, who requires that you should seek him early. Yea, hath he not cursed the deceiver, which hath in his Flock a Male, and sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing? And what are you but deceivers? Who waste the Lamp of time that God hath given you to work by, in the sinful delights of the flesh and *alienate* the chief of your strength and parts from him that should have been honoured, both with the *first* and *best* of your abilities, and in your Age have nothing to offer to him, but a large bedroll of hainous enormities, which may justly bring down

down your gray haires with sorrow unto the grave? How blessed a thing is it then for Men to give to God the *first-fruits* of their Youth, that he may not give them bitter *after-fruits*, and cause them to feel more smart of their sins in their Old Age, then ever they found pleasure or delight in them in their Youth? and what better Perswasions can I suggest, then to consider,

First, That early Piety gives both to the *Person*, and to his *Services* a peculiar Preheminence and Dignity above all others. The *Naturalists* observe, that the Pearles that are bred of the Morning Dew, are far more bright and clear, than those which are bred of the Evening Dew: And so are those duties of a greater worth and beauty, which are the fruits of a Morning, and not an Evening Godliness. It is the commendation of *Hezekiahs* Reformation, above all others of the Kings of *Judah*, that in the first year of his Reign, *in the first Moneth, he opened the doores of the House of the Lord.* It is that which makes *Josiahs* Memory to be as a Box of precious Nard, that *while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his Father.* It is an Honourable Testimony which *Paul* gives to *Epenetus*, that he was *the first-fruits of Achaia unto Christ*: and the like is that which he gives to *Andronicus* and *Junia*, that *they were in Christ before him*: To have a Precedency in the Faith, is not onely a *happiness*, but a *dignity*. What glory can be greater, then to be a *Jeremiah* sanctified from the Womb; or a *Timothy* nourished up in the words of Faith?

Secondly, The comfort of Age, is a well-spent Life; When a Man comes to the Grave as a *Shock of Corne* in its season, and not as a bundle of Tares to the Fire;

Fire; when the Bones are full, not of the Sins of Youth, but of the Services that were then done to God; when a Man can say, as dying *Hezekiah*, *Remember O Lord I beseech thee how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.* O it is sad when the sins of youth become the burthen of age! if the Grashopper then be a weight to the Body, what a pressure will heapes of Mountainous sins be to the Soul? Age at the best hath sufficient Griefes; it is of it self a Sickness, and a Neighbour to Death, and needs not the bad provisions of Youthfull Follies to make it worse. Let then the Counsell of Wise *Solomon* be acceptable unto you who are yet in the spring and flower of your age, to *Remember your Creator in the dayes of your youth*; and then if Death make you *Pale*, before Age make you *Gray*, you will have this comfort, that you are old in *howres*, though not in *yeares*; and have lived *much*, though not *long*; as having lost no time in sowing Seed unto the Flesh, as most doe, who make youth a foolish Seed-time to a Mourning Age; and Old Age a bitter Harvest to a foolish Youth. Or if your Almond-Tree shall flourish, and that a more gracious Old Age shall succeed a gracious Youth, Old Age it self shall be followed with a Crown of endless Glory.

Meditation

Meditation LII.

Upon a Rock.

IT is the saying of the *Moralists*, That Accidents which befall Men have a double handle, by which they may be apprehended; So as that if they be rightly taken, they become not onely less burthensome and unpleasant, but also of use and advantage to those that sustain them: like bitter Herbes that are by the skill of the Physician turned into a wholsome Medicine. The like may be said of this present Subject, that it hath a double aspect under which it may be represented to our Consideration, each of which will suggest thoughts far differing one from another, and yet both have their rise from Scripture. Doth not God bid us *look unto the rock from whence we are hewen, and to the pit whence we are digged?* And then what can it hold out to our view, but the misery of our natural condition, our deadness, deformity, barrenness, and untractableness to any good? Is it not the complaint of the best, that their hearts are Stony and Rocky, and that they are apt to stand it out with God, and not to yield to the Work of his Grace? is there any evil that in their account is more insuperable then a flinty heart? When did *Moses*, who had faith to work many Miracles, most distrust, but when he was to make the Rock to yield Water? though God commanded him to *speak* onely to it; yet, as deeming it insufficient, he *smote* it twice. And yet is it not the Promise of God to take away the stony

ſtony heart, and to give an heart of fleſh? And is it not that which I beg, that God would mollifie both my *Naturall* and *Acquired* hardneſs, and preſerve me from *Judiciall* hardneſs; That ſo I may not reſiſt *Pharoah*-like his *Meſſages*, his *Miracles*, his *Judgments*, and his *Mercies*, and grow worſe in ſtead of being better. I would that God might be a *Rock* to me; but I would be as *Wax* unto him, that ſo I might be apt to receive Divine Impreſſions from him. It is my ſin to be as a Rock to God, unflexible and ſooner *Broken* then *Bent*; But it is my unſpeakable comfort to think that God will be a Rock to me, who ſtand in a continual need of his aide and power, to uphold me, who, if I be not built upon him, cannot ſubſiſt; and if I be not hid in him can have no ſalvation. I cannot therefore but give ſome ſcope and line to my thoughts, that I may the better take in the honey and ſweetneſs that drops from this *Metaphoricall* Name of God, who is often ſtiled in Scripture, the *Rock of Iſrael*; the *Rock of Ages*; the *Rock of Salvation*. But here I muſt uſe the help of the Schooles, who rightly informe us, that when any thing of the Creature is applyed to God, it muſt be, *via remotionis*, by way of remotion; and *via eminentiæ*, by way of tranſcendent eminency.

Firſt, by way of *remotion*: All defects and blemiſhes whatſoever are not in the leaſt to be attributed unto him who is abſolutely perfect; as *Heraulds* ſay of *Bearings*, the reſemblance muſt be taken from the beſt of their properties, and not from the worſt. Is a Rock deformed, and of unequall parts? God is the firſt of Beauties, as well as of Beings, and all his attributes are equally infinite; his Juſtice is of as large extent as his Mercy; and his Wiſdom as his Power. Is a Rock unſenſible of the ſtraits of thoſe that fly unto it for ſuc-

cour?

cour? ſo is not God, who is both a Rock and a Father of *Mercies*: Who can read the expreſſions of his tenderneſs, and not be affected? *How ſhall I give thee up Ephraim? how ſhall I deliver thee Iſrael? how ſhall I make thee as Admah? how ſhall I ſet thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.*

Is the ſtrength of a Rock intranſient, and fixed in it ſelf, not communicating its vertue to what lies upon it? So is not the ſtrength of *Iſrael*, who is a *living*, and not a *dead* Rock, and gives both life and power to thoſe that are united to him. *I can do all things* (ſaith holy *Paul*) *through Chriſt ſtrengthning me.* Is a Rock Barren, and can yield no *food*, though it afford *ſhelter*; So is not God, who is a *full ſtore-houſe*, as well as a *free refuge*; a *Sun* as well as a *Shield.*

Secondly, *By way of Eminency*, all perfections whatſoever, either for *degree* or *kind*, which put a worth or value upon the Creature, are to be found infinitely more in God. Is a Rock ſtrong, and daſhing in pieces all reſiſtance made againſt it? God is incomparably more: He (ſaith *Job*) *is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength, who hath hardened himſelf againſt him and proſpered?* Is a Rock durable, and not ſubject to change, by the many revolutions of Ages that paſs over it? God is far more immutable, his yeares are throughout all Generations: he is the ſame yeſterday, and to day, and for ever: *In the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting ſtrength.* Is the ſhadow of a great Rock deſirable in a weary Land, to bear off the ſcorchings of the Sun, and to revive the fainting Traveller? what a covert and hiding place then is God, againſt all ſtormes, and heates whatſoever, raiſed either by the rage of Men, or by the Eſtuations of a troubled Conſcience, and fomented by the Maſice of Satan?

Satan? Is a Rock of an awfull aſpect for its height, and apt to work upon the head of him that looks down from the top of it? How great then is God whoſe glory is above the Heavens? whoſe faithfulneſs reacheth unto the Cloudes, whoſe righteouſneſs is like the great Mountaines, and whoſe Judgments are a great deep? And now methinks I may ſay to my Soul, as *David* did unto his, *Why art thou caſt down O my Soul? and why art thou diſquieted within me?* Cannot God keep him in perfect peace, whoſe Minde is ſtayed on him? is not he a very preſent help in the times of trouble? what evil can befall me, under which his everlaſting Armes cannot ſupport me? What Seas of Tryalls can overwhelm when God ſhall ſet me upon a Rock that is higher than I? As I my ſelf cannot climbe it, ſo neither can my Enemies power ever reach it. A Believer can onely be wounded by his own feares; as the Diamond is onely cut by its own duſt. *Peter* ſunk not till his Faith failed him: if his confidence had riſen, as the Winde and Billowes did, he would have greatly honoured his Lord, as his Rock, upon whom he was built, and have been highly commended by him, as he was for the good Confeſſion he made of him.

But, O bleſſed Saviour, if *Peter* cry out, *Save Maſter I periſh*, how much more ſhall I, who fall far ſhort of his little Faith? and am apt to fear, not onely in the *deep Seas*, but in the *ſhallow Brookes:* not onely when the *Waves roar*, but when the *petty Streames* murmur? Do thou therefore, holy Lord, teach me to know what a Rock thou art, and cauſe all thy glory to paſs before me, as thou didſt before *Moſes*, that ſo I may ſee every attribute of thine, as ſo many Clefts in the Rock, to which I may run in time of danger, and rejoyce to find how I am compaſſed about, with thy power, wiſdome, faithfulneſs,

faithfulneſs, and goodneſs, from whence more ſure comfort will ariſe, than if a numerous hoſt of *Angells* ſhould pitch their Tents round about me.

Meditation LIII.

Vpon a Counterfeit piece of Coyne.

VVHat Phyſicians ſay of ſome Diſeaſes, *Illi morbi ſunt periculoſiſſimi qui ſanitatem Imitantur*; That they are moſt dangerous which ſeem to imitate and come neareſt unto health, may be applyed fitly to adulterous and ſpurious Coynes, that the greater reſemblance and likeneſs they have to the true and genuine, the more pernicious and deſtructive they are to the Publick; waſting though inſenſibly not onely private Eſtates, but the common Treaſure and Riches of a Nation. And therefore the falſifying of Coyn, which beares the *Image* or *Armes* of the Prince, as the general Warrant to ratifie the goodneſs of it, hath been made a Crime of the ſame Complexion, with the higheſt attempt or act done againſt his *Perſon*, the ſame Capital Puniſhment being inflicted upon him that is found guilty of the one, as is upon him that is guilty of the other. What can be done more to deter any from ſuch Practiſes, then the loſs of Name, Eſtate, Life, in a gaſtly and ignominious death? and yet theſe ſeverities, which ſhould be as the Boundaries at the foot of the Mountain, to keep all from offending, are inſufficient to reſtrain many whom the love of gain, and the hope of ſecrecy do embolden to run a ſad hazard, that they may enjoy the ſweet. Secrecy in ſinning, though

though in some respect it extenuates a sin, as making it less *scandalous*, and less *contagious*, yet it is a powerfull attractive to incline to the Commission of a sin. *Josephs* Mistriss was most vehement in her solliciting of him to folly, when none of the Men of the house were within. The Harlot in the *Proverbs* makes that as her Plea to the Young Man to hearken unto her, *That the good Man is not at home, he is gone a long journey, he hath taken a bag of Money with him, and will come at the day appointed.* It was that which put an edge upon the Covetousness of *Achan*, to take the goodly *Babylonish Garment*, the *two hundred shekels of Silver, and the wedge of Gold*, that he could do it without the privity of any, so that none could charge him with the breach of that strict Command which God had given, of not taking the *accursed thing*, least they make themselves *accursed*, and the Camp of *Israel accursed*, and trouble it. Usually when shame and punishment are the sole Motives to deter from sin; the secrecy of doing it, by which both may be declined, swayes prevailingly to the commission of it. But how far more presumptuous are they, who adulterate not the *Coynes* of Princes, but the Truths of God, and stamp his Name upon their Inventions, to give a Credit and value unto them? Have such workers of iniquity any darkness and shadow of death where they may hide themselves? Do they think, that though Kings cannot discover those oft times that violate the Dignities of their Crown, that they also can escape the knowledge of the most High? or is not he as jealous of his Word, which he hath magnified above all his Name, as they are of every piece that carries their Intage and Inscription upon it? hath he not declared himself to be against those that Propheſie the deceits of their own heart, and use their Tongues, and say, the

Lord

Lord saith? Yea, hath he not denounced the most dreadful of Curses against all *Embasers*, or *Clippers* of his Heavenly Coyn? To the one he threatens all the Plagues that are written in the Word of Truth; and for the other, he shall take away his part out of the Book of Life, out of the holy City, and from the things that are written in the Book of God. Who can read such a Sentence and not tremble at the thoughts of it? And yet though God be (as *Bernard* speakes) *Sapiens Nummularius qui non accipiet nummum fractum vel fictum.* A wise Exchanger that will not take Money that is broken, or false, though we cannot mock him, as one Man mocketh another, how many do take a liberty to mint Doctrines and Tenents that have onely the *Semblance*, but not the *Purity* and substance of Divine Truth? and upon these they set the Name of God, that they may the more easily deceive the incautious? As *Pompey* built a Theater *Cum Titulo Templi*, with the Title of a *Temple*: and *Apollinaris* the Heretick a School *Cum Titulo Orthodoxi*, with the Title of Orthodox: What prevalency such Arts in this kinde have had, I would the defections of many Particular Persons, yea of Churches did not abundantly witness; Was not the whole Church of *Galatia* soon removed from him that had called them into the Grace of *Christ* unto another Gospel? by their false Teachers blending the necessity of Circumcision with the Gospel? and of Workes with Faith. And did not the *Corinthians* comply more readily with the false Apostles then with *Paul? Ye suffer, if a Man bring you into bondage, if a Man devour you, if a Man take of you, if a Man exalt himself, if a Man do smite you on the face.* It is the temper and disposition of most to be far more circumspect and jealous in the concernments of their *Estate*, then of their *Faith*; and to use both the *scale*

and the *test* to finde out *false* and light *Coynes*, when in matters of Faith, the question is seldom made, whose Image and Superscription do they bear? It is enough if they please Fancy, or else have the allowance of such whom they have in admiration. Can I then do less then bemoan the slightness and indifferency of Christians about Truth, which is the onely depositе that God hath Concredited to the Saints? and awaken both my self and others to buy the Truth at any Rate, but to sell it or debase it at no Rate. Rob but God once of his Truth, and what Riches of Glory do you leave him? Is not he the God of Truth, and are not ye witnesses, Chosen by himself, to give Testimony unto it? And can you dishonour him more, then to make him like the Father of Lies, while you either spread the infection of Errour to others, or receive it from others into your own Bosome? Bethink therefore your selves, you who Deliver the Oracles of God, that you be not as the Lying Vanities of the Heathen, which deceived those that repaired unto them: What comfort can you ever have in departing from the Form of sound Words, and in Speaking Affected and Swelling words? which are one of Satans Lures to seduce into Errors? Who can ever understand *Behmens gretming of the inward Root?* or the Canting of the *Familists*, of being *Godded with God*, and *Christed with Christ?* And be you wise, O Christians, in the differencing of such *impure Gibberish* from the Holy Dialect of the Spirit. Let not such Arts, which serve onely as the light of the Fowler in the night, first to amaze the Birds, and then to bring them into the Net, ensnare and captivate you; Keep untainted from *Errours*, the doctrines of Faith that you profess, which will be your glory; and the Duties that you performe to God from *hypocrisie*, which will be your Comfort. Let not your

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intercourse with Heaven be in such Services that are guilded onely with words of Piety, which make them specious to Men, and wholly destitute of sincerity, which can alone commend them to God. Would it not be a piece of inexcusable folly, for any to heap up a Mass of Counterfeit Coyn, and then to value himself to be worth thousands? And is it not far greater for Men to think that they have laid up much Treasure in Heaven, and are rich towards God, by the Prayers that they have made, and other Services that they have done, which will all be found at the last day *drosse*, and not *gold*? and will produce no other return, then the increase of a sore Condemnation? O the thoughts of it are dreadfull, to think, how many will be found poor miserable, and naked *Laodiceans*, who confidently presume, that they are rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing. I cannot therefore but Pray, Lord help me to buy of thee Gold tried in the fire; and to get such truth of Grace into my heart, that I may never be amongst the number of those who are justly hated by Men for hypocrites in this World, and condemned by God for hypocrites in the other World.

Meditation LIV.

Upon health of body, & peace of conscience.

IT was an high and Eminent testimony given by Sr. *John* to the Elder *Gaius*, in the Prayer that he made for him, with an earnest wish that *he might prosper, and be in health, even as his Soul prospereth.* It is a Crown that I could heartily desire might be deservedly set upon the head of every one, that is called by that honou-

rable Name of *Christian*; and then I doubt not, but those reproaches, which are dayly cast upon them, would fall as far short of them, as stones that are thrown at the Sun; and those Scandals, at which those who are without do stumble, would be removed, and they also won, by their Conversation to the obedience of the Faith. But alas! I must invert the Apostles wish, and if I will wish true Prosperity to the Saints themselves, Pray that their Soules may prosper, and be in health, as their Bodies prosper: So unequal is the welfare, for the most part, that is between the one and the other. Where may I find the Man? or who can tell me what is his Name, whose care and observance hath so far prevailed, as to make his Soul in an equal Plight with his Body? and to keep the one as free from Lusts, as the other from Diseases? Who ever thought it necessary, that Pensions should be given to Oratours to disswade Men from runing into Infected Houses? or to be out of love with Mortal Poysons? Is not the least jealousie and suspition of such things Argument enough to secure themselves against dangers that may fall out? But is there not need to admonish and warn the best and holiest of Men, that they abstain from Fleshly Lusts which war against the Soul? Is it not requisite to bid the most watchful to take heed of a *Lethargie*, when the Wise Virgins are fallen asleep? Did not Christ himself Caution his Disciples against having their hearts at any time over-charged with surfeting and drunkenness, and the Cares of this life? And yet the meanest of their Condition might seem to exempt them from such Snares? From whence then is it that the welfare and health of the Body should be more studiously endeavoured by all, then the well-being of the Soul in its Peace and Serenity is almost by any? Is it not from the strength of fleshly Principles which abide

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in the beſt, and darken oft times the eye of the underſtanding, that it cannot rightly apprehend its own concernments? If there were but a clear inſight into that Bleſſedneſs, into which Peace of Conſcience doth Eſtate a Believer, it could not be but that it being laid in the Ballance with the health of the Body, it ſhould as far over-weigh it, as a full Bucket a ſingle drop; or as the Vintage of Wine a particular Cluſter: True it is, that health of Body is the *Salt* of all outward bleſſings, which without it have no reliſh or ſavour; neither Riches nor Honours, nor Delights for the Belly or Back, can yield the leaſt Pleaſure where this is wanting; So that the enjoyment of it alone may well be ſet againſt many other Wants. And better it is to enjoy health without other additional-comforts, then to poſſeſs them under a load of Infirmities. And yet I may ſtill ſay, *Quid Palea ad Triticum?* What is the Chaff to the Wheat? Though it be the greateſt outward good that God beſtowes in this Life, it is nothing to that Peace which paſſeth all underſtanding? Sickneſs deſtroyes it, Age enfeebles it, and Extremities imbitter it. But it is the Excellency of this divine Peace that it worketh joy in Tribulation, that it ſupports in Bodily languiſhments, and creates confidence in death. Who is it that can throw forth the Gauntlet, and bid defiance to Armies of Trialls, to perſecution, diſtreſs, famine, nakedneſs, peril and ſword; But he whoſe heart is eſtabliſhed with this Peace? the ground of which is Gods free love; the Price of which is Chriſts ſatisfaction; the Worker of which is the Holy Spirit; and the Subject of which is a Good Conſcience. This was it that filled old *Simeons* heart with joy, and made him to beg a Dimiſſion of his Saviour, whom his eyes had ſeen, his armes embraced, and his Soul truſted in.

What a ſtrange thing is it then, that there ſhould be ſo few Marchant-men that ſeek this goodly Pearl, which is far above all the Treaſures of the Earth, that are either hid in it, or extracted from it? Many ſay, Who will ſhew us any good? but it is *David* onely that Prayes, *Lord lift up the light of thy Countenance upon us.* Others like the ſcattered *Iſraelites* in *Egypt*, go up and down gathering of Straw and Stubble; when he, like an *Iſraelite indeed*, in the Wilderneſs of this World, ſeeks *Manna*, which his Spirit gathers up and feeds upon with delight; and then cries out, *Thou haſt put gladneſs in my heart, more then in the time, that their Corn and their Wine increaſed.* It is the love of God ſhed abroad in the heart, that doubleth the ſweetneſs of proſperity, and ſweetens alſo the bitterneſs of affliction: A wonder onely therefore it is, not that few ſhould ſeek, but a much greater, that any in this World ſhould live without it. Can any live well without the Kings Favour, either in his Court, or Kingdom? And yet there are many places wherein ſuch Perſons may lie hid in his Dominions, when the utmoſt ends of the Earth cannot ſecure them againſt Gods frownes. But if any be ſo profligate as *Cleopatria*-like to diſſolve this Jewel of Peace in his Luſts, and to drink down, in one prodigious draught, that which exceeds the World, in its price, and yet think they can live well enough without it; let them conſider how they will do to die without it. Sweet it is in life, but it will be more ſweet in death; It is not then the *Sun-ſhine* of Creatures, but *Saviour-ſhine* that will refreſh them. It is not then *Wine* that can cheere the heart, but the Blood of *Sprinkling* that will pacifie it. The more Perpendicular Death comes to be over our head, the leſſer will the ſhadow of all Earthly comforts grow, and prove uſeleſs, either to aſſwage

aſſwage the paines of it, or to mitigate the feares of it. What is a fragrant poſie put into the hands of a Malefactor, who is in ſight of the Place of Execution, and his Friends bidding him to ſmell on it? or what is the delivering to him a Sealed Conveyance, that Intitles him to great Revennes, who hath a few minutes onely to live? But O what exceſs of joy doth fill and overflow ſuch a poor Mans heart, when a Pardon from his Prince comes happily in to prevent the Stroak of death, and to aſſure him both of Life and Eſtate? This is indeed as health and marrow to the bones. And is it not thus with a dying Sinner? who expects in a few moments to be ſwallowed up in thoſe flames of wrath? the heat of which already ſcorch his Conſcience, and cauſe Agonies and Terrors which imbitter all the comforts of life, and extract cries from him that are like the yellings of the damned; I am undone, without hope of recovery: Eternity it ſelf will as ſoon end as my miſery: God will for ever hold me as his enemy, and with his own breath will enliven thoſe Coles that muſt be heaped upon me. Of what value now would one ſmile of Gods Face be to ſuch a perſon? how joyfull would the ſofteſt whiſper of the Spirit be, that ſpeakes any hope of Pardon, or Peace? would not one drop of this Soveraign Balm of Gods favour let fall upon the Conſcience, heal and eaſe more then a River of all other delights whatſoever? Think therefore upon it, O Chriſtians, ſo as not any longer through your own default, to be without the ſenſe of this Bleſſing in your hearts; that ſo in life, as well as in death, you may be filled with this *Peace of God, which paſſeth all underſtanding.* If Prayer will obtain it, beg every day a good look from him, the light of whoſe Countenance is the onely health of yours. If an holy and humble Walking

will preserve it, be more carefull of doing any thing to lose your Peace, then to endanger your health; remember that Peace is so much better than health, as the Soul is better then the Body.

But Grant, Holy Father, however others may neglect, or defer to seek Peace with thee, and from thee, yet I may now find thy Peace in me by thy Pardoning all my iniquities, and may be found of thee in Peace without Spot, and blameless in the great day.

Meditation LV.

Upon a Looking-Glass.

WHat is that which commendeth this Glass? is it the Pearl, and other precious stones with which the Frame that it is set in is richly decked and enammelled? or is it the impartial and just representation which it makes, according to the Face, which every one that beholds himself brings unto it; Surely the Ornaments are wholly forraign, and contribute no more to its real worth then the Cask doth to the goodness of the Wine into which it is put; or the richness of the Plate to the Cordial in which it is administred. That for which the Glass is to be esteemed, is the true and genuine resemblance which it makes of the object which is seen in it, when it neither flatters the Face, by giving any false Beauty to it, nor yet injures it, by detracting ought from it. To slight then or neglect the Glass for the meanness of its Case, and to value it onely for its Gaiety, is no better then the

the folly of Children, or the bruitish Ignorance of those, who prize the Book by the *Cover*, and not by the *Learning* that is in it. To quarrel at the Glass for its returning a most exact and absolute likeness of the Face that is seen in it, is to despise it for its excellency, and can come from no other ground, than a consciousness of some guilt. Is it not for this very respect, that beautiful persons both prize it, and use it happily too much? It being the only means whereby they come to be acquainted with their own comliness, and to understand what it is that allures the hearts and eyes of all towards them. Who then but those whose features Nature hath drawn with a *Cole*, rather than a *Pencil*, or whom age and sickness have robbed of what they formerly prided themselves in, shun the familiar use of it? Or be angry when they look into it, as if it upbraided them, rather than resembled them? *Phryne*, the famous Harlot, throws passionately away her Glass, saying, *Qualis fum nolo, qualis eram nequeo*; As I am I will not, as I was I cannot behold my self: And yet is not this anger against the Glass causeless? Doth it make the gray hairs on the head? Or the pock-holes and wrinkles in the face? Or doth it discover only what Age and Diseases have done? And let them see what they cannot conceal from the eyes of others? Now, what doth all this argue, but an averseness in men to understand the truth of their own condition, and a willingness through self-flattery to deceive themselves in thinking of what ever they have above what is meet? Great must needs be the impatiency against truth, when the silent reflections of a Glass, that vanish as soon as it is turned from, kindle such dislikes in the breast as to make them to cast it from them, for doing only the same thing to them which it doth to others. Here

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methinks we may learn the ground, why carnal men are offended at the Word, both in putting scorn and contempt upon it, by the low and mean thoughts they have of it, or else by the anger which they express against it, in throwing this blessed Mirrour from them, in as great, though not so good, an heat as *Moses* did the Tables which he brake beneath the Mount. Some pick a quarrel with the plainness of the Word, as if it wholly wanted those Embroideries of Wit and Art that other writings and discourses abound with, and had none of those quaint and taking Expressions that might win upon the affections of them that converse with it. But is not this to make such use of the Word as Young Children do of the Glass, more to behold the Babies in their own eyes, than to make any observance of themselves? Is the Word writ or preached, to have its reflections upon the *Fancy*, or upon the *Conscience*? Is it to inform only the *head*, or to reform the *heart*? If the inward man be the proper Subject of it, the *simplicity* of it conduceth more to that great end than the *Contemperation* of it with humane mixtures. It is not the *painted*, but the *Chrystal* Glass by which the object is best discerned. Others again are not a little displeased with the Law or Word of God, because when that they look into it both their *persons* and *sins* are represented in a far differing manner from those conceptions they ever had of the one or of the other. In their own eyes they are, as *Absoloms*, without any blemish; but in this Glass they appear as deformed *Lepers*, and spread with an universal uncleanness, and who can bear it to see himself thus suddenly transformed into a Monster? Now, their sins, which they judged to be as little as the Motes in the Sun-beams, appear in amazing dimensions, and

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it is to them, not a *Looking-glass*, but a *Magnifying glass*. Thoughts of the heart, glances of the eye, words of the lips, the irruptions of the passions are all censured by it, as deserving death, and there is nothing can escape it, which as a Rule it will not guide, or as a Judge condemn. O how irksome must this needs be to carnal and unregenerate men, who abound with self-flatteries, and presumptions of their own innocency and righteousness, who can with as little patience endure the convincing power of the Word as sore eyes can the severe searchings of the light? We need not then wonder that the Word hath so many Adversaries, who take part with *Nature* against *Grace*, setting their wits on work by distinctions, and blended interpretations, to make it as a Glass breathed and blown upon, which yields nothing but dim and imperfect reflections. Is there any thing that the Word doth more clearly assert than the loathsome condition of mans Nature with which he comes into the world? Is it not expressed by the filthiness of the birth which every Child is encompassed with when it breaks forth from the Womb? Is it not resembled to the rottenness and stench of the Grave into which man is resolved when he is said to be dead in sins and trespasses? And yet how many when they view themselves in this Glass give out to the World that they can see no such thing? *Celestius* of old thought that original sin was *Res quæstionis, non fidei*, matter rather of dispute, than of faith. And some of late have been more bold, calling it *Austins figment*. But the more injurious others are to this Divine Mirrour of truth, the more it behoves every good Christian to be studious in vindicating it from the scorns of such that despise it for its *simplicity*, and from the impieties of others that seek

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to corrupt its *purity*: and to shew that for what cause others hate it, he most affectionately loves and prizeth it. *Thy word is very pure,* (saith *David*) *therefore thy Servant loveth it.* Can you do God better service, while you honour his Word, which he hath magnified above all his name? Or can you do your selves more right, than to judge your selves by that which is so pure that it neither can deceive, nor be deceived. What though it present you with the sad spectacle of your sins, which may justly fill you with shame and self-abhorrency; doth it not shew unto you also your Saviour, who is made unto us, Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption? And cannot this joyful sight raise you more than the other can cast you down? O fear not to see your sin, when you may at the same time behold your Saviour? A mourning heart is the best preparation for spiritual joy, and serves to intend the height of it, as dark colours do to set off the Gold that is laid upon them. Give me therefore, O Lord, a broken and relenting heart, that Sin may be my Sorrow, and Christ may be my Joy; let all my tears drop from the eye of faith, that I may not mourn without hope, nor yet rejoyce without trembling. Let me see my sins in the Glass of the *Law* to humble me, and my Saviour in the Glass of the *Gospel* to comfort me; yea, let me with open face so behold his glory, as to be changed into the same Image from glory to glory.

Meditation

Meditation LVI.

Vpon going up an high Mountain.

Lord, who ſhall dwell in the Mountain of thy holineſs? was a queſtion made by the Prophet *David*, but the anſwer returned unto it was by the Spirit of God, who can give the beſt Character of all thoſe who ſhall be received into *Claritatis Conſortium*, a fellowſhip of glory and bliſs, as *Tertullian* expreſſeth it. The *ſcituation* of the place, the *quality* of the perſons do both ſpeak it to be a work of difficulty, and diſvover alſo the ground of the paucity of the Travellers in whoſe hearts thoſe waies and aſcentions are that ſeek to God. Moſt of the men of the world, like *Abrahams* Servants, ſtay below at the foot of the hill, while he and his Son go up to worſhip; or chooſe rather, like *Ahimaaz*, to run the way of the Plain, than, with *Cuſhi*, the way that was craggy and mountainous. But few there be that ſee under what a neceſſity they lie of obtaining of heaven, and of dwelling in the Mountain of Gods holineſs, or underſtand the comfort that a continned progreſs in this Journey yields to thoſe to whom Salvation is nearer, than when they firſt believed. Can it therefore be amiſs to evince thoſe who are yet to make the firſt ſtep towards their own happineſs, what timely diligence they had need to uſe, that in the end they may not fall ſhort of it? And to encourage thoſe that are on their way, that they may go from ſtrength to ſtrength, till they appear before God in *Sion*. And how may I better do either, than by ſhewing to one,

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the great *distance* in which they ſtand from heaven; and to the other, the good *proficiency* they have made, which is oft times as indiſcernable to themſelves, as the ſwift motion of the Ship is to them that are in it. There being no Complaint more frequent in the mouths of Saints, than that they have got no farther, than what many years ſince they judged themſelves to have attained unto. The *natural* mans diſtance is far greater than he thinks of, ſo that he cannot eaſily ſtep into Heaven as he preſumes. He is not born near its Confines or Borders; but in the very extremity of remoteneſs from it. The diſtance is not only a diſtance of *place*, but of *diſproportion*, and *unlikeneſs*, whereby he is wholly unmeet for it: Yea, there is in him not only a *diſſimilitude*, but a formal *contrariety* and *oppoſition* againſt heaven, which muſt be deſtroyed and taken away before he can come thither. He is *darkneſs*, and Heaven is an *Inheritance in light*. He is a Sink of *filthineſs*, and Heaven is a place of *purity*; He is wholly *Carnal*, and the happineſs of Heaven is *ſpiritual*; And what *fellowſhip* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *hath righteouſneſs with unrighteouſneſs? What Communion hath light with darkneſs? And what Concord hath Chriſt with Belial?* Can it then be rationally thought an eaſie taske to ſubdue this contrariety; and to make fleſh and bloud meet to inherit heaven? Doth not the ſtraitneſs of the way, and the height of its aſcent, require a putting off, and a caſting away, every ſin that hinders from running the Chriſtian Race, and aſcending the holy Hill? Is it not neceſſary, that the oppoſition and diſſimilitude extending it ſelf over the whole man, that an anſwerable change ſhould be made in every part? I have read, that it is affirmed by excellent *Artiſts*, that though *gladneſs* and *grief* be oppoſites in nature,

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yet they are such neighbours and *Confiners* in Art, that the least touch of the Pencil will translate a *crying* into a *laughing* Face. But such is not the opposition between sin and grace, as to admit so facile a change in the turning of a Sinner into a Saint. It is not effected by a small touch made upon the *face*, but by a powerful work upon the heart, yea, upon the whole soul. Doth not the Scripture set it forth by *a New Birth*, by *a New Creation*, which are of all mutations the greatest, and fully evince the vast distance that is between every natural man and Salvation? Deceive not your selves therefore O ye loose *Professors*, nor ye fond and presumptuous *Moralists*, who are apt to think that the shadows of your duties and civilities will extend themselves to the top of this holy Mountain; and who when you read of the young man who answered Christ discreetly, that he was not far from the Kingdom of heaven, judge your selves both in knowledge and practice his Equals, and that you want not many steps of entring into that blessed *Canaan* of rest and glory. For what will proximities or degrees of nearness avail if the end it self be not attained?

Exaltations towards heaven, if they lift not into heaven, serve only to make the downfall the greater; and no man stumbles more dangerously, than he who is upon the brow of an high Mountain in respect of ruine? It is not then a ground for any to slack their pace, or intermit their diligence in heavens way upon the confidence that they have not far to go. But rather to intend their care and pains, that they lose not those things which they have wrought, but that they may receive a full reward. And this let me say, if an apprehended nearness work not such effects, it is a *dream*, not a *reality*; a *presumption*, rather than a *progress*, and will

will have as ſad an iſſue as the happineſs of that poor Fiſherman, who, ſleeping in the ſides of a Rock, dreamed that he was a King, and leaping up ſuddenly for joy, found himſelf miſerably broken and rent in the bottom of it.

But I fear that while I propound the difficulties, which are great, as well as many, intending thereby to ſhake only the Pillars of thoſe mens Confidence, who conſider neither the length of the way, nor the hardneſs of the task by which Salvation is attained; that I may diſhearten others, who, after all their travel and labour, complain that they have ſtriven much and gained little; and that their hopes of laying hold on Eternal life do rather languiſh than encreaſe, doubting that the Journey is much too long for their ſhort life to finiſh. Gladly therefore I would lift up the hands which hang down, and ſtrengthen the feeble knees, that they might be animated in the way, and not deſpair of the end. Now how can this be better done, than by giving ſuch Signs and Evidences that will beſt ſerve to manifeſt their motion and proficiency; the not diſcerning of which is the ground of thoſe fears of their ſpending their ſtrength in vain, and their labouring for nought? And is not this more readily perceived by looking downwards to thoſe objects that are below, than by looking upwards to the heavens, which will after all climbing to them ſeem to be ſtill at the like diſtance as they were at firſt.

Suppoſe that a man after hard labour and toyl in reaching the top of ſome high and ſteep Cliff, ſhould conclude that he had wearied himſelf to no purpoſe, in the gaining of a delightful proſpect, becauſe the Sun appears to be at the ſame diſtance, and alſo of equal bigneſs, as when he was at the bottom of it; or

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that the Stars seem still to be but as so many twinckling watch lights, without the least encrease of their dimensions, or variation of their figure: Might he not be easily refuted, by bidding him to look down to those Plains from whence he had ascended, and behold into what narrow scantlings and proportions those stately buildings and Towers were shrunk and contracted, whose greatness as well as beauty he erewhile so much admired? And may I not with the like facility answer and resolve the discouraged Christian, who calls in question the truth of his heavenly progress, because all those glorious objects which his Faith eyes, and his soul desires to draw nigh unto, seem still to be as remote from him, as at his first setting out, by wishing him to consider, whether he cannot say, that though heavenly objects do not encrease in their magnitude or lustre, by the approach that he makes to them; that yet all earthly objects do sensibly lose theirs by the distance that he is gone from them? And if he can but so do, surely he hath no cause of despairing to obtain heaven, who hath travelled so far on the way as to lose well near the sight of Earth. If once his faith hath raised him to that height, as to make the glory of the world to disappear, and to be as a thing of nought, it will quickly land him in heaven, where his fears of miscarrying as well as his lassitude in working will be swallowed up in an everlasting rest. And he that did once believe more than he saw, shall for ever see far more than ever he could have believed. Lord therefore do thou, who giveſt power to the faint, and to them that have no might, encrease strength to me, who wait upon thee; renew my strength, that I may mount up with wings as an Eagle, and may run and not be weary, and walk and not faint, untill I come to the ut-

most bound of the everlasting hills, and behold thy face in glory.

Meditation LVII.

Upon the Bible.

Quintilian, who makes it a question, why unlearned men in discourse seem oft times more free and copious than the Learned, gives this as the answer; That the one without either *care*, or *choice*, expres whatsoever their present thoughts suggest to them, *Cum doctis sit electio & modus*: When the other are both careful what to say, and to dispose also their Conceptions in due manner and order. If any thing make this Subject difficult to my Meditation, it is not *want* but *plenty*, which is so great, as that I must, like *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab*, be forced to lay aside much of that costly stuff which presents it self to me. And what to refuse, or what to take in, is no easie matter to resolve. It will, I am sensible, require and deserve also more exactness in chusing what to say, and what not to say, concerning its worth and excellency, and how to digest what is spoken, than what is meet for any to assume unto himself. I shall therefore account that I have attained, my end, if I can but so imploy my thoughts as to encrease my veneration to this Book of God, which none can ever too much study, or too highly prize; and with which to be well acquainted, is not only the chief of *duties*, but the best of *delights*, and pleasures. What would be our condition in this world if we had not this blessed Book among us, would it not

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be like *Adams*, when driven out of *Paradise*, and debarred from the Tree of Life? Would it not be darker than the Earth without the Sun? If the world were fuller of Books than the heaven is of Stars, and this only wanting, there would be no certain way and rule to Salvation: But if this alone were extant, it would enlighten the eyes, make wise the simple, and guide their feet in the paths of life.

True it is, that for many years God made known himself by *Visions*, *Dreams*, *Oracles*, to persons of *noted holiness*, that they might teach and instruct others; But it was while the Church of God was of small growth and extent, and the persons to whom Gods Messiges were Concredited of unquestioned Authority with the present Age. But afterward the Lord spake to his Church both by *Word* and *Writing*, the one useful for further *revealing* Divine Truths, and the other for the *recording* of them, that when the *Canon* was once compleated, all might appeal unto it, and none take the liberty of coyning Divine *Oracles* to himself, or of obtruding his *fancies* upon others.

And were there no other use of this *Book of God* than this, that it should be the Standard for the trial of all Doctrines, it were to be highly prized for its worth; without which the minds of men would be in a continual distraction, through the multitude of *Enthusiasts*, that would be pretending *Commissions* from heaven, none knowing what to believe in point of Faith, or what to do in point of Obedience, or whereby to difference the *good and evil Spirit* from each other. But this single benefit (though it can never enough be thankfully acknowledged to God by us) is but as a Cluster to the Vintage, or as an Ear of Corn to the Harvest, in respect of those many blessings that may

be reaped from it. Doth not *Paul* aſcribe unto it an univerſal influence into the Welfare of Believers, when he ennumerates ſo many noble Ends for which all Scripture is profitable? What is it that makes any man wiſe to Salvation? Is it not the Scripture? What is it that inſtructs any in Righteouſneſs, and makes him perfect, and throughly furniſhed unto all good works? Is it not the Scripture? Is not this the only Book by which we come to underſtand the heart of God to us, and learn alſo the knowledge of our own hearts? Both which as they are the breaſts of myſteries; ſo they are of all knowledge the beſt, and fill the ſoul with more ſatisfaction than the moſt exact diſcovery of all created Beings whatſoever. What if a man could, like *Solomon*, ſpeak of Trees, from the *Cedar* that is in *Lebanon* to the *Hyſop* that groweth upon the Wall, and of Beaſts, Fowls, and Fiſhes, and yet were wholly ignorant of his own heart, would not the light that is in him be darkneſs? Or what if a man could reſolve all thoſe poſing queſtions in which the Schoolmen have buſied themſelves concerning Angels, and yet know nothing of the God of Angels, would he not become as a ſounding Braſs, and a tinckling Symbal? Is the knowledge of theſe things the great end for which our underſtanding was given unto us? Or is it any further deſirable or profitable than as it conduceth to the knowledge of God? Doth the *rectitude* of our actions, and the *holineſs* of them, flow from the knowledge we have of any Creature, or from the knowledge of God? Is not his Will the Rule, and his Glory the End of all that we do? And how ſhould we ever come to know what the good and acceptable will of God is, but by his revealing it unto us? Which he hath done moſt clearly and fully in this bleſſed Book of

of his, *the Scripture of truth.* That then which commends this Book, and renders it worthy of all acceptation, is the rich discoveries that it makes to us concerning so *Excellent a Being* as God is, whom it acquaints us with in his *Nature*, *Perfections*, *Counsels*, and *Designs*, in relation to the Eternal Salvation of man. It contains not any thing that is mean or trivial; the matters in it are all of no less glory for any to behold, than of weighty *importance* for all to know.

Do we not read in it, with what *Majesty* God gave forth his Sacred Law, when Thunders, Lightnings, dark Clouds and Burnings were used as Heralds in the promulgation of it? And yet may we not again see the hidings of his power, in the wonderful Condescensions of his *goodness*? How doth he *intreat*, *woo*, and *importune* those whom he could with a frown, or breath easily destroy, and pursue with bowels of mercy, such whom he might in Justice leave, and cast off for ever? Are there not in it *Precepts* of exact purity, that are as Diamonds without flaws, and as fine Gold without dross? In all other Books, they are as the most Current *Coyns*, that must have their *Alloyes* of baser Metals; But in this they resemble the Author, who is *light* in which there is no *darkness*, and a *Sun* in which are no *spots*. Are there not in it *promises* of infinite value as well as goodness, in which rewards are given not of *Debt*, but of *Grace*, and to such who have cause to be ashamed of their *Duties*, as well as their *Sins*? Are there not in it *Premonitions* of great faithfulness, in which God fully declares to men what the issues of sin will be?

And proclaims a Judgment to come in which the Judge will be impartial, and the Sentence most severe, against the least offences, as well as against the greatest; What is it that may teach us to serve God with *Chearfulness*, to *trust* him with *confidence*, to *adhere* to him with *resolution* in difficulties, To submit to his Will with patience in the greatest extremities, that we may not be abundantly furnished with from this Book. It alone is a perfect *Library*, in which are presented those deep mysteries of the Gospel, that Angels study, and look into both with delight and wonder, being more desirous to pry into them, than of perfect ability to understand them. They are such, that had they not been revealed could not have been known, and being revealed, can yet never be fully comprehended by any.

Was it ever heard, that he who was the maker of all things, was made of a Woman? That the Ancient of daies was not an hour old? That Eternal life began to live? That he, to whose Nature Incomprehensibility doth belong, should be inclosed in the narrow limits of the Womb? Where can we read but in this Book, that he who perfectly hates sin, should condescend to take upon him the similitude of sinful Flesh? That he, who was the Person injured by Sin, should willingly be the Sacrifice to Expiate the guilt of it, and to dye instead of the Sinners? Are not these such Mysteries as are utter impossibilities to Reason? And at which, like *Sarah*, it laughs, rather than, with *Abraham*, entertain them with an holy reverence and joy when made known? *Reason* is busie in looking after Demonstrations, and enquires how this can

can be, and then ſcorns what it cannot fathom: But *Faith* reſts it ſelf in the Revelations of God, and adores as a myſtery what he diſcovers. Yea, it makes theſe Myſteries, not only *Objects* of its higheſt Adoration, but the grounds of its ſure *comfort* and *confidence*. From whence is it, that Faith fetcheth its ſecurity againſt Sin, Satan, Death, and Hell? Is it not from this, that he who is the Saviour of Believers is God-man manifeſted in the Fleſh? That he who is their *Sacrifice* through the Eternal Spirit offered himſelf without ſpot to God, to purge their Conſcience from dead works to ſerve the Living God? That he who is their *Advocate* did raiſe himſelf from the dead, and aſcended into the higheſt Heavens to make everlaſting Interceſſions for them? Can then any depreciate this Book, or abate the leaſt *Iota* of that awfull Eſteem which upon all accounts is due unto it, and be guiltleſs? Or can any neglect this Book as unworthy of their reading, which God hath thought worthy of his Writing, without putting an affront upon God himſelf, whoſe Image it bears, as well as declares his Commands? And yet I tremble to think how many *Anti-Scripturiſts* there be, who have let fall both from their Lips and Pens ſuch bold Scorns, as if Satan ſtood at their right hand to inſpire them. It was open Blaſphemy, and worthy that *Antichriſtian Crue of Trent*, to affirm, *That though the Scripture were not, yet a body of ſaving Divinity might be made out of the Divinity of the School.* The prophaneneſs of *Politian* ſhall make his name to rot in a perpetual ſtench, who never read the Bible but once, and ſaid, it was

the worſt time that ever he ſpent. And yet what are the fruits of his ſtudies, but ſuch as *Gellius* ſtiles, *Scholica Nugalia*, a few trifling Commentaries, and Criticiſms. More I could readily name of the ſame Stamp, that have preſumed Impiouſly to ſcoff at the *Revelations* of God, as others at his *Providence*, but who can take pleaſure to rake in a *Dunghill* that may enjoy the fragrancy of a *Paradiſe*; I ſhall therefore turn my thoughts from them, and, as having nothing to caſt over their wickedneſs, ſhall, *Sanguinem pro velamento obtendere*, call my bloud into my face, and ſpread it as a Vail in bluſhing for them, that ſhould have bluſhed and been aſhamed for themſelves. But though the Word of God ceaſeth not to be a reproach unto them, yet I ſhall bind it as a Crown unto me. Though they reject the Counſel of God againſt themſelves, yet I ſhall make his Teſtimonies my delight, and the men of my Counſel, and ſhall make the prayer of the *Pſalmiſt* to be my dayly prayer, that God would open mine Eyes, that I may behold the hidden wonders that are contained in his Law.

Mediation

Meditation LVIII.

Vpon the Spirituall Warfare.

WHo can either think or read what a Slaughter was made by one Angel in the numerous Army of *Sennacherib*, who in a night destroyed a hundred fourscore and five thousand Men, without reflecting upon the vast disparity that is between the strength and power which is in *Angelicall* and Humane beings? Great things are recorded in Sacred History to be done by some of *Israels Judges*, and *Davids Worthies*, which would be looked upon as impossibilities, if the Spirit of God were not the Voucher of the Truth of them. *Shamgar* slew six hundred *Philistims* with an Ox Goad; *Sampson* with the Jaw-bone of an Ass laid Heapes upon Heapes; and *Adino* the *Tachmonite* lifted up his Spear against eight hundred, whom he slew at one time. But if these, and the like remarkable Acquists, which others also are famed for, and have their Names Enrolled in the List of Worthies, were as several Parcells brought into one Totall, how far short would the foot of the Account be, in regard of this number which fell by the Sword of one Angell? Well then may the Scripture give to them the Names of Mighty ones, of *Principalities* and *Powers*, such as excell in strength. How quickly would a *Legion* of such *Elohims* turn the whole World into a *Charnel*-house, filled with the Scalls and Bones of its Inhabitants, when a single Angel can in a small space of time Change so many living Persons into

into dead Carcases? How soon could they cloy and surfet the Grave it self, which is as unsatiable as any of those four things, that say, *It is not enough?* Doth not all this therefore greatly heighten the wonder of the Spiritual Warfare, in which a frail Christian, who hath not put off the infirmities of the Flesh, doth yet go forth to Fight and War with the Combined Hosts and Powers of Darkness? If young *David* were looked upon as an unequal Match by *Saul*, and all *Israel*, to Combate with *Goliah*, the vastness of whose Stature, and Warlike Armes had struck a terror into the whole Camp; how strange must it needs be deemed, that one, who to the outward view, is as any other Man, should Conflict not with Flesh and Blood, but with Spiritual Wickednesses, which are for number many, and for Power great? What is one weak Lamb to resist the Lyons of the Forrest? or one harmless Dove to encounter with the Birds of Prey? as impotent as either of these, may the strongest of Men seem, to do ought to deliver themselves, or to offend any of their Spiritual Enemies when they assault them. But yet the resolved Christian, who is called to an holy Warfare by God, he doth such noble Exploits against Sin and Satan, as cause both a shout and Wonder in Heaven. Angells are affected to behold what a great fight of Afflictions he endures; what Repulses he gives to the reiterated Assaults of enraged Fiends; and when at any time worsted, how he Rallies again, recovers his Ground, and comes off both with *Victory* and *Triumph*, putting to Flight whole Armies of those *Infernal Anakims*. It is worth our enquiry and knowledge then, to understand wherein this great Strength of a Christian lieth, which is not a *Naturall*, but a *Mysticall* and *Sacramentall* strength, like *Sampsons*? But it lies not in his *Hair*, but in his *Head*, and

and in his *Armour*, which for the *Efficiency* of it, as well as for the *Excellency* of it, is called the *Armour of God.*

First, The *Head* of every Believer is Christ, who derives an influence of life and power worthy of himself. *I can do all things* (saith Paul) *through Christ that strengtheneth me:* There is a continued Efflux of vertue that goes from him, which to every Christian communicates a kinde of Omnipotency: He, who without Christ can do nothing, can in him do every thing. What a Catalogue of forces doth the *Apostle* muster up in the Eighth of the *Romans*, from which he supposeth an opposition may come? *Life, Death, Angells, Principalities, Powers, Things Present, Things to Come, Heighth, Depth?* And that he may leave out none, addes, *nor any Creature:* And yet pronounceth of them, that in all these *We are conquerors, yea more then conquerors:* Which, as *Chrysostome* Interprets it, is to overcome them with ease, without paines, and without swear. O then that Christians did but understand their own strength, that they War in the Power of his Might, who spoiled Principalities, and Powers, and made a shew of them openly, leading them as so many Pinioned Captives after the Chariot of his Cross, whereon he shewed many signal Testimonies of a Glorious Victory, in saving a Thief without Meanes; in Rending the Vail of the Temple from the top to the bottom; in Shaking the Earth, Cleaving the Rocks asunder, opening the Graves, and causing many Bodies of Saints to arise. How greatly would these thoughts keep us from being weary and faint in our Spiritual war, and make our hands steady like the hands of *Moses*, untill the going down of the Sun of our Life.

Secondly, A Christians strength lies in his *Armour*, which

which when rightly put on, is able to preſerve him, that the evill one touch him not: There is no ſtanding in the Battell without it, and there is no fear of periſhing in it. When did ever Satan bruiſe or wound the head of him, that had the *Helmet of Salvation* for his Covering? or endanger the Vitals of him, who had put on the *Breſt-Plate of Righteouſneſs*, and had *his loynes girt about with truth*? What one fiery dart of the wicked did ever ſo burn, that the *Shield of Faith* could not quench? or what way of ſufferings could not he walk in, *whoſe feet are ſhod with the preparation of the Goſpel of Peace*. Methinks when I conſider that God who beſt knowes the utmoſt both of Satans Power and Policies, is the Maker of the Armour: It is a voice becoming every Souldier of Chriſt, to ſay, of whom ſhould I be afraid? If he call us to Fight, and furniſh us with Armes that are unable to defend us, or to offend our Enemies, he would ſuffer in his Glory, as well as we in our Comfort; he would then have his *champions* to be Satans *captives*, and the *Banner* which they ſpread in his Name, to become Hells *Trophie*. And can he, do you think, endure at once to ſee the deſtruction of his People, and the diſhonour of his Name? VVhoſoever therefore thou beeſt, that art clad in this Armour of Proof, let me ſay unto thee as the Lord to *Gideon*, *Goe in this thy Might*, and fight the Battels of *Jehovah*. Take unto you that *Sword of the Spirit*, that will kill Luſts, and make the Devils to flee: It hath wrought VVonders in all Ages, and its Edg is ſtill as ſharp as ever it was. *By the Word of thy Lips* (ſaith David) *I have kept me from the pathes of the deſtroyer*. *It is written*, ſaid our Saviour, when he Foyled his and our Adverſary, and put him to flight after his repeated Aſſaults. And in that great Battel that we

read

head was fought between *Michael* and his *Angels*, and the *Dragon* and his *Angels*, he and his Host were overcome by *the Blood of the Lamb*, *and the Word of their Teſtimony*. Let every Man then have his Sword upon his thigh, becauſe of fear in the night: Put not off your *Armour* till you put on your *Robes*. It is made to be worn, not to be laid up, nor yet to be laid down, becauſe our VVarfare and our Life are both finiſhed together; till then there is not a *Truce*, much leſs a *Peace* for to be expected? Sooner may we contract a league with Poyſons, that when taken down they ſhall not kill; or with fiery Serpents and Cockatrices, that they bite not, then obtain the leaſt reſpit in this VVar, in which the Malice of Curſed Devils is as unquenchable as the fire of Hell, to which they are doomed. Lord, therefore do thou, who art the *Prince* of Life, the *Captain of Salvation* to all thy People, who haſt finiſhed thine own VVarfare, and beholds theirs, enable me to VVraſtle, that I may neither *faint* nor *fall*, but prevaile unto Victory; ſhew forth thy VVonders in Me, whoſe Strength is Perfected in VVeakneſs, that I may overcome the VVicked One. And though the Conflict ſhould be long and bitter, yet make me to know, that the *ſweetneſs* of the Reward will abundantly Recompenſe the Trouble of the *Reſiſtance*; and the *Joy* of the *Triumph*, the *Bloodineſs* of the *War*.

Meditation

Meditation LIX.

Upon going to Bed.

HOw like is the frail *Life* of Man to a *Day*, as well for the *inequality* of its length, as the *mixture* that it hath both of Cloudes and Sun-shine? VVhat a kinde of exact *Parelia* are *Sleep* and *Death*; the one being the *ligation* of the Senses, and the other the *Privation* of them? And of how near a kin is the *Grave* to the *Bed*, when the Scripture calls it by the same Name? when the *Clothes* that cover us do the like office with the *Mould*, that must be cast and spread over us? VVhen therefore the *Day*, and the *Labours* which Man goeth forth unto are ended, and the darkness of the Night disposeth unto Rest; what thoughts can any better take into his Bosome to lie down with? then to think, that Death, like the Beasts of the Forrest may creep forth to seek its prey, and that when it comes there is no resistance to be made, or delay to be obtained. It spares no rank of Men; but slayes the *rich* as well as the *poor*, the *Prince* as well as the *peasant*: The Glass that hath the Kings Face painted on it, is not the less brittle; neither are Kings, that have Gods Image represented in them the less mortal. And whether it comes in at the *window*, or at the *door*, whether in some Common, or in some unwonted manner who can tell? Many oft times fall asleep in this World, and awake in the other, and have no Summons at all to acquaint them whither they are going. And yet though every Mans condition be thus uncertain, and that his Breath is in his

his Noſtrils, where there is as much room for it to go out, as to come in; how few do make their nights repoſe to ſerve as a *memorial* of their laſt reſt? or their Bed to ſtand for a *model* of their Coffin? Some pervert the Night, which was ordained to be a Ceſſation of the evils of Labour, to make it a ſeaſon for their greater activity in the evils of ſin. *They deviſe* (as the Prophet ſaith) *iniquity upon their Beds, and when the morning is light they practiſe it, becauſe it is in the power of their hand.* Others are eaſily brought aſleep, by the riot and intemperance of the day, owning their unhappy reſt not to the dew of nature, but unto the groſs and foul vapours of ſin, which more darken and eclipſe their reaſon than their ſleep? their *Dreames* having more of it in them than their *Diſcourſe*. Others again by their youth and health ſeem to be ſeated in ſuch an elevation above death; as that they cannot look down from their *Bed* into the *Grave* without growing dizzy, ſuch a ſteep Precipice they apprehend between life and death? Though this diſtemper doth not ariſe from the diſtance between the two termes, but from the imbecillity of their ſenſe, which cannot bear the leaſt thoughts of a ſeparation from thoſe delights and pleaſures to which their Soules are firmly wedded. VVhen therefore the moſt of men are ſuch unthrifts of time, and like careleſs Navigators keep no *Journal* or *Diary* of their motions, and other occurrences that fall out. VVhat need have others to make the Prayer of *Moſes the Man of God*, their Prayer? *So teach us to number our dayes, that we may apply our hearts unto wiſdom.* He who was Learned in all the Sciences of the *Ægyptians* deſires to be taught this point of *Arithmetick* of God; *ſo to number*, as not to miſtake, or make any error in the account of life, in ſetting down *dayes* for *minutes*, and *yeares* for *dayes*.

A Man would think that a little *Arithmetick* would ſerve to caſt up ſo ſmall a number, as the dayes of him, whoſe dayes are as the dayes of an hireling, few and evill? and yet it is ſuch a Myſtery, that *Moſes* begs of God to be inſtructed in it, as that which is the chief and onely knowledge. Yea, God himſelf earneſtly wiſheth this wiſdom to *Iſrael* his People, *O that they were wiſe; that they underſtood this, that they would conſider their latter end!* Can we then render the night more ſenſeleſs? or keep the Bed unſpotted from thoſe Impurities that are neither few nor ſmall, then by practiſing duely this Divine Art, of numbering our dayes? which is not done by any ſpeculation, or prying into the time or manner of our death: but by meditating and thinking with our ſelves what our dayes are, and for what end our life is given unto us; by reckoning our day by our work, and not by our time; by what we do, and not by what we are: By remembring that we are in a continual progreſs to the Chambers of death; no Mans life being ſo long at the evening as it was in the morning. Night and day are as two Axes at the root of our life, when one is lifted up, the other is down, without reſt: every day a Chip flies off, and every night a Chip, and ſo at length we are hewen down, and fall at the Graves mouth. O what a wide difference is there between thoſe that lie down with theſe conſiderations in their Boſomes, and others, who paſs their time in pleaſures, and allow not the leaſt portion of it, to think what the iſſues are that a day or night may bring forth? How free are their Converſations from thoſe ſenſualities and luſts, which others commit in the day, and lie down with the guilt of them in the night? How profitably do they improve their time who count onely the *preſent* to be theirs, and the *future* to be Gods;

Gods; above those, that fancy youth and strength to be a security of the succeeding proportions of their life? yea, how comfortable is death to those, who are in daily preparation for it, as well as in expectation of it, above what it is to others, who are surprized by it in the midst of those delights, in which they promised themselves a continuance for many yeares? In what a differing frame and figure doth it appear to the one and to the other? The one behold it as a Bridg lying under their feet to pass them over the *Jordan* of this life, into the *Canaan* of eternall Blessedness; and the other as a Torrent roaring and frighting them with its hasty downfall: Gladly therefore would I counsell Christians, who enter into the Church Militant by a *mystical* death, being buried with Christ by Baptisme, and cannot pass into the Triumphant, but by a *Natural* death, to bear dayly in their Mindes the Cogitations of their inevitable end, as the best meanes to allay the fear of death, in what dress soever it comes, and to make it an inlet into happiness whensoever it comes. As *Joseph* of *Arimathea* made his Sepulcre in his *Garden*, that in the midst of his delights he might think of death; So let us in our *Chambers* make such Schemes and Representations of Death to our selves, as may make it familiar to us in the Emblemes of it, and then it will be less gastly when we behold its true visage. When we strip our selves of our Garments, think, *That shortly* (as St. *Peter* saith) *we must put off this our Tabernacle.* I, and think again, what a likeness there is between our *Night-Clothes*, and our *Grave-Clothes*, between the *Bed* and the *Tombe*. What a little distance there is between *life* and *death*, the one being as an *Eye open*, and the other as an *Eye shut*: in the twinkling of an eye we may be living and dead Men. O what ardors of lusts

would such thoughts chill and damp? what sorrowes for sins past? what diligence for time to come to watch against the first stirrings of sin would such thoughts beget? It being the property of sin to divert us rather from looking upon our end, then embolden us to defie it. Lord then make me to know my end, and the measure of my dayes, that I may in my own Generation serve the will of God, and then fall asleep as *David* did, and not as others, who fall asleep before they have done their work, and put off their Bodies before they have put off their sins.

Meditation LX.

Upon the Natural Heat, and the Radical Moisture.

THere is a Regiment of Health in the Soul, as well as in the Body; in the inward Man as well as in the outward Man; they being both subjects incident to distempers, and that from a defect, or excess in those qualities, which when duely regulated are the Principle, and Basis of life and strength. What preserves and maintaines the Natural life, but the just temperament of the *Radicall Moisture*, and the *innate heat?* and what again endangers and destroyes it, but the heat devouring the moisture, or the moisture impairing the heat? When either of these prevail against each other, diseases do suddenly follow. And is it not thus in the Soul, and Inward Man? In it those two signal Graces of *Faith* and *Repentance*, do keep up and cherish the Spiritual

Spiritual life of a Christian; Faith being like *Calor innatus*, the Natural heat; and Repentance like *Humidum Radicale*, the Radical moisture. If then any by believing should exercise Repentance less, or in Repenting should lessen their Believing, they would soon fall into one of those most dangerous extreams, either to be swallowed up of Sorrow and despair, or else to be puffed up with security and presumption. Is it not then matter of Complaint that these two *Evangelicall Duties* (as some Divines have called them) which in the practise of Christians should never be separated, should be lookt upon by many to oppose, rather then to promote each other in their operations: Some out of weakness cannot apprehend what consistency there can be between Faith and Repentance, whose effects seem to be contrary, the one working Peace and Joy, the other trouble and sorrow; the one Confidence, the other fear; the one Shame, the other boldness. Now such as these, when touched with the sense of their sin, judge it their duty rather to mourn, then to believe, and to feel the bitterness of sin, then to taste the sweetness of a Promise, and put away comfort from them, least it should check and abate the over-flowings of their sorrow. Others again, whether out of heedlessness, or wilfullness, I will not determine, when they behold the fullness of Grace, in the blotting out of sin, the freeness of Grace in the healing of Backslidings, they see so little necessity of Repentance, as they think it below (as they so speak) a Gospel Spirit to be troubled for that which Christ hath satisfied for. It is not Repentance that they should now exercise, but Faith; Sorrow seems interpretatively to be a jealousie of the truth of Gods Promise in forgiving, and of the sufficiency of Christs Discharge, who was the surety, who

hath not left one single Mite of the *Debt* for believers to Pay. Sorrow therefore seems to them as unseasonable, as it would be for a Prisoner to mourn, when the Prison door is opened, and himself set free from debt and bondage.

Thus this pair of Graces and duties, concerning which I may say as God did of *Adam*, it is not good that either of them should be alone: are yet divided often times in the *practise*, though indissolubly linked together in the Precept. Fain would I therefore evidence to the *weak* the *concord* of these two graces, in respect of *Comfort:* and to the *wilfull* the necessity of them both, in order unto Pardon.

Unto the *weak*, therefore I say, That the Agreement between Faith and Repentance, doth not lie in the immediate impressions, which they make upon the Soul, which are in some respects opposite to each other; but in the *Principle* from which they arise, which is the same, the Grace of Christ; and in the end which is the same, the salvation of Man, and in *habitude* and subordination that they have one to another; for Repentance is never more kindly then when it disposeth us to the exercise and actings of Faith; whose comforts of joy, Peace, and Serenity of heart, are as Gold which is best laid upon sad and dark colours; or as the Polished *Diamond*, that receiveth an addition of lustre from the watering of it. Gods Promise is, that the Believing *Jewes*, who look upon Christ by an eye of Faith, shall be also great Mourners, *They shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his onely son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first borne.*

Unto the *careless*, or *wilfull*, I also say, That God never forgiveth sin, but where also he giveth a Penitent and Relenting Heart; So that though Faith hath a peculiar

culiar nature in the receiving of pardon, applying it by way of Instrument which no other grace doth; yet Repentance is the *expres's formal* qualification that fits for pardon, not by way of *causality* or *merit*, but by way of *means*, as well as of *command*, which ariseth from a *Condecency* both to God himself, who is an holy God, and to the nature of the Mercy, which is the taking and removing of Sin away. Never dream then of such free grace, or Gospel mercy, as doth supercede a broken and a contrite heart, or take off the necessity of sorrowing for sin. For Christ did never undertake to satisfie Gods wrath in an *absolute* and *illimited* manner, but in a well *ordered* and *meet* way, *viz.* the way of Faith and Repentance. How else should we ever come to taste the bitterness of sin, or the sweetness of grace? How to prize and esteem the Physician if not sensible of our disease? How to adore the love of Christ, who redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, by being made a Curse for us, if not burdened with the weight of our Iniquities? Yea, how should we ever give God the glory of his Justice, in acknowledging our selves worthy of death, if we do not in a way of repentance judge our selves, as the Apostle bids us? Was not this that *David* did in that solemn Confession of his? In which he cries out, *Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight, that thou mightst be justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest.* Can I therefore wish a better wish to such who are unsensible of their sins, than *Bernard* did, to him whom he thought not heedful enough about the judgments of God, who writing to him, instead of the common Salutation, wishing him, *Salutem plurimam*, much health, said, *Timorem plurimum*, much fear; that so their confidence may have an allay of trembling? Sure I

am that it is a mercy that I had need to pray for on my own behalf, and I do, Lord, make it my request, that my faith for the pardon of sin may be accompanied with my sorrow for sin, and that I may have a *weeping eye*, as well as a *believing heart*, that I may mourn for the evils that I have done against my Saviour, as well as rejoyce in the fulness of mercy that he hath shewed to me in a glorious Salvation.

FINIS.